The Serious Price Guide For Serious Collectors!

OVERSTREET

COMIC BOOK MONTHLY

No. 8
December
1993

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A LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

The October Philadelphia ComicFest was great fun for the whole Overstreet staff, and, as usual, our booth was buzzing with activity all four days. We were privileged to meet hundreds of collectors who stopped by to pick up the latest copy of our various publications or just to say hello. The autographed Jae Lee HellShock cards that we gave away at the show were very well received. Thanks Jae! Also a personal thanks to everyone who stopped by.

Speaking of publications, our NEW Overstreet Comics & Cards Price Guide #1 is now available everywhere. This handy paperback is priced at only $6.00, and has an up-to-date pricing section on Silver Age to recent comic books and cards.

Our camera crew continued filming in Philadelphia for the Overstreet Productions documentary "The Amazing World Of Comic Book Collecting." More interviews were held with top artists, writers, and others who have contributed to the incredible growth of our hobby.

I'm happy to announce that this history making documentary will be available directly through this magazine soon, so look for announcements in future issues.

A number of our advisors conducted a survey of dealers at the show and amassed some amazing pricing data and sales information, including several verified record sale prices for certain rare books! Of course, this data will be reported in upcoming issues of the Comic book monthly as well as the upcoming 1994-95 Annual Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide.

The AD DEADLINE for the Annual Guide is DECEMBER 15th, 1993. Don't miss another year without placing your ad in the most widely circulated comic book publication in the world! Call our advertising department at (615) 472-4135 and reserve your space now. And if you're a SHOP OWNER you can list your store in the Annual Guide for just $20. It's an ad well worth the money.

I hope you enjoy this issue of CBM, and thanks for continuing to say "Make Mine Overstreet!"

Robert M. Overstreet

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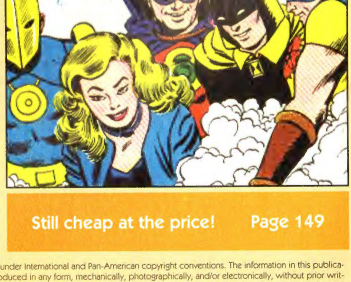

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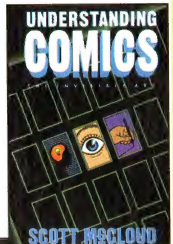
Issue Number 8, December 1993

McCloud, Kirby, and Fish for Christmas!

While at the ComicFest in Philadelphia I chanced upon Scott McCloud's table. Scott is well known in the comic book world for being personable, talented, and actually rather brilliant. I confirmed these rumors for myself both by meeting him personally and by reading his new book Understanding Comics. And wow... what a book it is. This is the volume that every kid in the US will use to convince skeptical parents that comics are worthwhile, legitimate, and historically important literature. This is the manuscript that reads as effortlessly as your favorite comic book, yet could easily be used for a mass media text book! I can envision comic readers all over the country using Scott's book to bridge the chasm of non-communication with family members who don't understand our passion for comics. This one is one of the few books that has come my way in recent years that has really hit the mark as both edification and entertainment. Treat yourself to great read and check this one out.



© Jack Kirby, Ray Wyman, Jr., & Catherine Hohlfeld

© Scott McCloud

And speaking of great reads, most every Kirby trivia question you ever wondered about is answered in The Art Of Jack Kirby written by Ray Wyman and researched by Ray Wyman and Catherine Hohlfeld. For instance I've wondered for twenty years who inked Kirby's pencils on the cover of Tales To Astonish #1 (Jan 1959) Well guess what? On page 118 the mystery inker is finally named... and that's just one of the many hundreds of killer comic book facts that populate nearly every page!

If you enjoy Kirby, Golden Age and Silver Age comics, comic book history, or just enjoy scoping out full color pictures of high grade, beautiful, and rare stuff, this one's for you. And best of all, it's available in a paperback version so you can by an extra copy for a friend. Bravo and encore to Ray and Catherine for helping a whole new generation of collectors understand what "ole-timers" already know - mainly that Jack kirby is one of the greatest geniuses in the history of comics - and that without his countless contributions, there might not be any comic books today!

On a final note, let's talk about fish... er... feesh... er fiche... sheeesh! Well, how ever you spell it, fiche are nishe... er nice! Have you ever wanted to read all those great books from the '40s, but just couldn't find the cash? Recently I've been reading some of the older material on a micro fiche reader and the quality is excellent. I picked up the comics on micro fiche for about $5 a comic from an outfit called Micro-Color International out of New Jersey. And best of all, I don't worry about damaging the fiche like I do every time a take an old comic out of the mylar.

So next time you're racking your brain for Christmas suggestions, just think "Mcloud, Kirby, and Fish... er fiche... Sheeesh!

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Gary

Gary M. Carter

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CBM

By Steve Fritz

Philadelphia ComicFest a mixed bag - The Philadelphia ComicFest was a mixed bag. Every major publisher was present in one form or another (although Valiant didn't take a booth, they were spotted there). The trade show was considered less than successful by just about everyone's standards. Approximately 400-500 people showed up for the business-to-business part of the ComicFest and the Philadelphia Convention Center looked pretty empty during the "Expo" portion.

On the other hand, when the Fest itself opened, it was a good thing that the Convention Center has a lot of space. Convention organizers David Greenhill Productions reported that over 30,000 fans showed for the event. Saturday, October 10, was particularly crowded.

The Greenhill team also stated that they will also be utilizing the humongous Jacob Javitz Center in New York City for a June show.

Marvel Unveils Fleer Ultra X-Men Cards - At the Philadelphia Expo, Marvel unveiled their upcoming Fleer Ultra X-Men cards. For those who don't know about sports cards, the Ultra set was Fleer's premium card line until they recently released the super premium card set. Artists on the cards so far include the likes of the ubiquitous Joe Jusko and Julie Bell. The whole Fleer Marvel project is spearheaded by Fleer's new VP of Business Development Bill Jemas, who previously was the man responsible for making basketball cards very hot when he was one of the senior executives at NBA Properties.

Marvel CEO Terry Stewart also announced that Marvel just signed a deal for hot MTV animation property Beavis & Butthead. More on that to come, if no additional irate teenagers burn down Marvel HQ.

But not everything is rosy at Marvel. Diamond Comics Distributors has just published a full list of all the Marvel UK titles that are being delayed, shelved, or just cut. It's 25% of the UK catalog, or 16 titles. Cuts are also coming to the Frontier and Epic sub-imprints. Most retailers this reporter have talked to aren't shedding any tears.

NYCDCA Takes HSN to Court - The New York City Department of Consumer Affairs has pressed charges of deceptive practices against (1) the Florida-based Home Shopping Network, (2) the Collector's Showcase sports memorabilia shopping show, and (3) Cincinnati Reds Hall of Fame catcher and CBS World Series announcer Johnny Bench. The charges stem over broadcasts involving the respective parties aggressive hawking of sports memorabilia and the values assigned to the items, as well as what they were sold for and printed price guide values.

Bench placed the blame on Home Shopping and Collectors Showcase, which is owned by card and memorabilia manufacturer, Score Board Inc. HSN and Score Board say they have done nothing illegal. They also state that they have not tried to dupe the consumers who watch their shows. Whatever the outcome, innumerable sports memorabilia dealers are dancing for joy as they see consumers beginning to question prices and values quoted on the show, something many of them have been suggesting was the case all along.

The comic industry is keeping a very close eye on this case. As is well known, a number of comic creators have also appeared on these shows and the publishers are concerned that their artists might be the next ones under the spotlight like Mr. Bench.

A decision on this matter is expected shortly. A member of the NYCDCA has gone on the record that if things don't go to her satisfaction, she will take the three parties to court. The State of Florida's Attorney General Office has also announced that they are now investigating Home Shopping Network on similar charges.

Ten-Cent 1939 Marvel Comic Book Sells for $55,000 - Los Angeles - A 1939 *Marvel Comics* #1 has broken records by commanding $55,000, it was announced today by the Pacific Comic Exchange, Inc., the company that brokered the book.

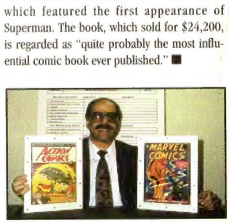
The book introduced "The Human Torch", considered in the trade to be "the most incendiary and explosive character ever to appear in the history of comics."

The Human Torch, reputedly inspired by Act I of William Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, was a "synthetic man" created by the mysterious Dr. Horton in his laboratory. Dr. Horton kept the Human Torch in an airtight beaker, when released, the gaseous android became an inferno that could melt through steel vaults and perform other incredible feats.

Another issue of *Marvel* #1 was big news a year ago when the Pacific Comic Exchange, Inc., brokered its sales at $27,500.

"This sale is just another in a series showing us how vintage comic collecting, which so many people start out doing just for fun, can become a very important investment," explained Robert Roter, President of PCE.

The book was traded on PCE's international on-line computer network, which began operation in 1990. Other Recent PCE sales have also included a 1938 *Action Comics* #1 which featured the first appearance of Superman. The book, which sold for $24,200, is regarded as "quite probably the most influential comic book ever published." ■



COLLECTING ROBO-COVERS

Robots of today can build cars, plumb the ocean depths, and explore the far reaches of outer space. Impervious to heat, cold, extreme pressure, and age, robots can truly "go where no man can go!" We've all become far more tolerant, blasé, and desensitized when it comes to modern day robots. Star Wars, The Jetsons, Lost in Space, Autobots, Decepticons… you name it. Errant machinery makes for good story lines, yet back in the late 30's and 40's, a robot's potential danger still played on our deepest fears.

The Robot's of comic book science fiction have "modern fictional" robots beat by a mile. They have deadly strength and sinister intelligence… and their bizarre and fantastic shapes and sizes are almost uncountable! Our culture has always had nagging fears about these "collections of pulleys and servos"… these "bags of buckets 'n' bolts". And science fiction writers and artists regularly preyed upon these fears by serving up stories of mechanical men who were designed to serve mankind at first, but who inevitably destroyed it.

Comic books offer a natural media for robot stories. Pulps only gave you a cover and an illustration (or two) per story. But In comics, the entire story was illustrated in color to help fully visualize the terrible threat exactly the way the author/artist intended. And in the first few decades of comic history they did scare us, with panel upon fantastic panel of robotic machinery and menacing imagery.

By Steve Gentner

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Featuring LANCE LEWIS, Space Detective
STARTLING COMICS
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Startling Comics #49 (Jan 1948) - Fast becoming one of the most sought after Schomburg covers! (page 148)

Action Comics #36 (May 1941) - The Man of Steel battles the traditional 'bucket of bolts' style robot common in the 1940s.

Leading Comics #13 (Winter 1944-45) - Scarce high grade white cover issue.

Fantastic #11 (Jan-Feb 1955) -This scarce last issue hit the stands one month before the Comics Code.

Human Torch #23 (Summer 1946) - After WWII, the Human Torch turns his attention to a new threat; mad scientists' and rampaging robots.

Exciting Comics #45 (March 1946) - Unlike most robots, this one needs a dagger and a .45 automatic!

Brick Bradford #6 (1948) - An obscure Schomburg robot looms taller than the skyline.

Journey Into Unknown Worlds #49 (Sep 1956) - Classic 'Invasion of the Metal-Men' cover.

World's Finest #49 (Dec-Jan 1950-51) - Years before computer chess, Robin loses a checker game to a robot opponent, as Superman & Batman look on.

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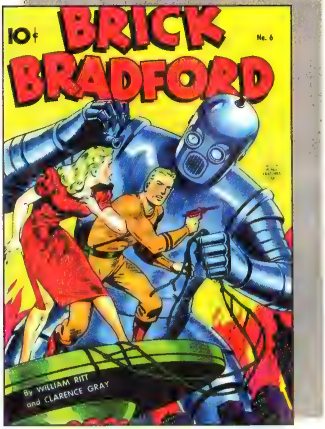

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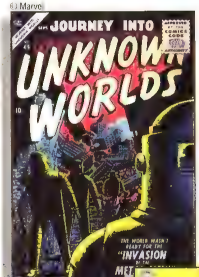


The vast majority of "robot covers" portray "mechanical men" as evil, calculating, and soulless villains. Terrible as adversaries, robots were seemingly invincible to us pitiful humans until salvation arrived in the guise of a hero. The amount of global mayhem and lethal weaponry used by one of these "comic" robots was only limited by the imaginations of artists, writers, and most of all, the readers!

It all began in August of 1939. Most researchers list *Smash Comics* #1 as the first robot cover in comic book history. "Bozo the robot" looked remarkably similar to the Michelin-tire man, and had 12 covers to his credit (the most of any Golden Age robot character). From Hal Sherman's clunky Star Spangled Kid adversary on *Star Spangled Comics* #1, to Alex Schomburg's refined, air-brushed, woman stealer (with its keen eye for beauty) on *Startling Comics* #49, robots came in an amazing myriad of shapes and styles. By my count, there are some 90 or so robot covers depicted in all of the Gerber Photo Journal of Comics alone. From *Action Comics* #36 to *Zip Comics* #3, robots challenge mankind and its heroes and for everything from scantily clad women to world domination.

Many robot stories were similar and their stereotypic plot elements were both humorous and full of pathos. Consider this one: Kindly Doctor Smith perfects his life's work; a robot that can climb trees! Evil thugs immediately see the opportunity to have the robot rob high-rise apartments. Our hero eventually stops the robot by spraying water on the out-of-control device and saves the day. "But I created my robot to serve mankind... not to rob it (sob!)" fade to black - the end!

As collectors pursue such divergent collecting themes as heroes, titles, artists, and writers - they often overlook one of the all-time great comic book genres; robot-covers! Some of this increasing collector interest is, no doubt, coupled with the increase in demand for all science fiction covers... and some because collectors just seem fascinated with the topic. But one thing is for sure. As we make our way into a future filled with friendly and helpful robots, it seems likely that comic books depicting the darker side of this poignant and timely topic will continue to rise in both demand... and price! ■

Que

A lot of readers have been talking about your new character Ninjak. Who actually developed the character?

The character was pretty much developed by a bunch of us at Valiant… Bob Layton, myself, John Harts, Mark Moretti, and Kevin Vanhook. I was given the assignment to create the look for Ninjak and then we all got together for round table discussions to figure out the characters past, present, future, and adversaries. It was really a collaborative effort, but Bob and I… and John Hartz created the basic framework for the character.

Does Ninjack have a secret identity?

Yes… the character's secret identity is Colin King. He is essentially your standard millionaire-playboy type guy who secretly works for the weaponeer in the Valiant Universe. He is essentially an enforcer, a protector, and an agent for the weaponeer. So he takes care of cleaning up the deals that have gone wrong.

Who is his main adversary?

His main adversary is a gentleman by the name of Dr. Augustus Silk. He runs the greatest computer and information organization in the Valiant Universe. Silk has access to everything, but he can't find out who Ninjak is and can never find out his secret identity.

Does Ninjack have any super powers?

No. Ninjak is a regular mortal, he has no super powers. He has been trained in the art of the Ninja, and in all forms of martial arts. He spent a large part of his childhood growing up in Japan and was schooled in Japan. Of course he was ostracized because he was an occidental, so he eventually started to learn martial arts and then the art of the Ninja. Somewhere down the line (which I can't really divulge right now) something will happen to disgrace him, and he will lose all interest in pretty much all aspects of life.

He works for the weaponeer for several reasons, which I also can't get into right now, but he has an interest there. Also his father was an ambassador/military man, so Ninjak has traveled extensively around the world and is of British decent.

We have worked out his past and we've also worked out his future. I mean Ninjak lives a standard, normal life span, and we've figured out his future to the point to where he drastically effects, even on his death bed, Magnus' Universe. He is kinda like the linchpins to everything in a lot of ways. Between him and Silk, you probably have the two most brilliant men in the Valiant Universe.

Silk is probably my favorite character in the whole Ninjak mythos. When we created Ninjak, we agreed that we really had to create a villain who is very strong. During one of our round table discussions we came up with a guy who I think is even better than Master Dark.

sad A

We've got a real rivalry going on between them, sort of like Batman and Joker. The rivalry between Ninjak and Silk is really going to be something to remember! I think the readers will eventually decide for themselves who is the ultimate winner… and I certainly won't spoil the surprise.

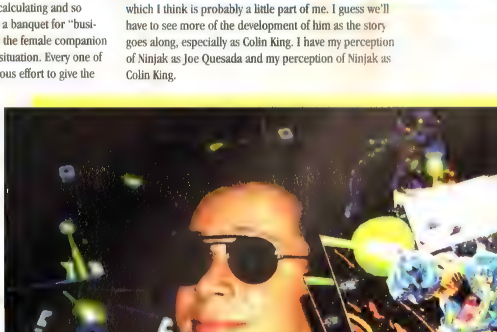
Will Ninjak have a romantic relationship?

Right now, Ninjak has no real romantic life. Essentially his character wouldn't find just any woman very interesting. He is searching for something out of the ordinary. You won't see Ninjak involved with one particular woman because he is so calculating and so cold. For instance, if he has to go to a banquet for "business" reasons (to spy), he'll choose the female companion he feels is most appropriate for the situation. Every one of his actions is performed as a conscious effort to give the right impression or to lull the enemy into a false sense of security.

Do you project any of yourself into the character?

That's tough to say, because I know every character I've done has a certain part of me that goes into it. I remember when I did the Ray for DC… there was a lot of me put into it. There was less of me in Azrael than in any other character I've worked on. Azrael was a little tough for me to relate to.

With Ninjak, it's a little hard to tell because I've only done the first set of pages so far. Ninjak has a certain coolness about him, self restraint. He has a certain machiavellian kind of attitude towards the world… which I think is probably a little part of me. I guess we'll have to see more of the development of him as the story goes along, especially as Colin King. I have my perception of Ninjak as Joe Quesada and my perception of Ninjak as Colin King.



Quesada Incognito!

Left : Joe and the "QuesadaCats"!

Opposite: Gatefold cover to Sword of Azrael. Inset shows Joe's cats 'leaping' into comics.

I wonder how I would act if I was Ninjak or as any Ninja for that matter. In that respect it is sometimes a little harder for me to relate to. But once I get to those pages I'll decide.

Are you trying anything different on this project than your usual approach?

Well actually yes. Artistically, I'm trying to do a couple of different things for myself here. I'm going back to the story telling that I was really fond of, which was stuff like Azrael. It can really be difficult to deal with so many characters, as in the case of X-Factor. The storytelling is a whole different thing. The difficult part is that Mark Moretti has told such an amazing story in the first issue and I want to get everything in it.

I'm drawing eleven and twelve panel pages, so it's an incredible amount of work. Right now there is a lot of reference involved because there is such "high tech" weaponry. And in the Valiant Universe you can't just make the stuff up… it's all got to be based on real world. We are dealing with Stinger-rocket launchers, and, on top of that, there's a certain art nouveau/art deco feel to the book, so there is a lot of research required for that too.

I felt the cover that you did for this issue is some of your best work. Do I detect a little Maxfield Parrish influence in it?

Yeah, there's a little bit of Parish, there's a lot of Alfons Mucha… there's even some influence from Japanese wood engravings. I'm trying to do something that I know a lot of guys have tried to do in comics in the past… the art nouveau look.

And it never really caught on. I'm not saying that because I'm doing it it's going to catch on, but I'm going to give it a try. Because the work will appear in a Valiant number one issue - a book that has a good chance of being seen by a lot of readers - I'm hopeful it could catch on. But I feel like I should explain that there is a real dichotomy there because it's not all art nouveau and it's not all art deco and there are definite differences between the two. Where nouveau tends to be little more flowery and organic, deco tends to be a little harsher and colder. I think it will be very visually interesting and fit the mood of the story just right. The flowery part fits in nicely because one of Colin King's hobbies is growing flowers. Like Bruce Wayne has his Batcave, Colin is a prize winning botanist.

Raising flowers seems to be a real contrast to the other "activities" of a hired assassin…

Correct! Here is a man who would not think twice about hacking a guy into pieces, and yet he finds solace in his garden. That's where he does his meditation, pruning and caring for his flowers.

Actually, that aspect of him developed after I started to do the whole art nouveau look. I turned to Bob and said, "This guy needs a hobby, what do you think about this?" Everyone loved the idea. I'm using the art nouveau aspect to enhance several panels and a certain look for Ninjak (when he is Colin King) in his mansion.

The art deco, which is a little harsher and colder, I'm going to try to spread throughout Silk's realm. Deco buildings are supposed to be scary looking structures, so I'm going to try to play one against the other and see how it goes.

Two contrasting styles plus as many as twelve panels a page must provide some interesting challenges in terms of "whole page" composition.

It's very challenging! As we've discussed in previous interviews, I see storytelling as music or as sounds or rhythm, like beats on a drum or beats in a measure.

Mark had a lot of concentrated story information to put into the issue and I wanted to add a lot too. As you can imagine, concentrating that much story information onto each page is tough. You have to experiment to find out exactly what works and what doesn't. Page three might be a twelve panel page with a lot of plot and action on it… like arms deal going down for instance. While another page introduces Ninjak as a shadowy figure in the rafters looking down on that same arms deal.

I wanted to do something out of the ordinary and had all the panels I wanted to use. But first I had to know what rhythm to use… where to place each character… so I had to mix and match until I thought I'd found something good. Then when I was done, I realized all my influences were showing. It was like, oh my gosh, it's Frank Miller! Look there, it's Mike Mignola! Over there, it's David Mazzuchelli! Even Alex Raymond and Dave Gibbons! All the guys that influenced me are coming back to haunt me. (Laughter)

Speaking of creative influences, What's John Hartz like to work with?

John is amazing… he is an absolute ball of energy. Listening to John talk about the industry is amazing. John seems to have his finger on the pulse of everything in the business.

He can almost tell you which way the tide's going to turn. It's really amazing to hear him talk. He's just one of those guys who relies on pure guts. He's almost like the stock broker who just knows "it" is going to happen. You can't explain it. He really is intuitive, so to speak. But his energy is unbelievable, and his imagination is great. A lot of Ninjak comes from John's knowledge of Bruce Lee. Ninjak is like a combination of Bruce Lee, James Bond, and Sherlock Holmes… all put together. You might want to highlight the Sherlock Holmes part, because that's going to be a fun thing later on. And maybe even a little bit of Batman thrown in for good measure. That part probably comes from me. I've always loved Batman. I can't deny that influence.

What are the famous Valiant "round table" creative sessions like.

Essentially most of them take place at Bob Layton's favorite restaurant (which is also my favorite restaurant). It's a place downtown in Soho. We end up there once or twice a week with whomever wants to come.

It would generally be me, Bob, John, and Mark. Every once-in-awhile, Jorge Gonzales or Tom Ryper would sit in. We'd sit there and just bat around ideas. We would throw ideas around the table… answer questions about Ninjak's past, present, and future. I remember John Hart asking "What if Ninjak did this?" and "how will this affect this in the future?" And we'd all shout "yes, oh my gosh!!!!" and we'd write that down. And then I'd say "What if Augustus Silk is actually this kind of person?" Then everybody would say "oh yes!!!!!"… and we'd write that down.

So the round table creative discussions tend to be a lot of fun. Ya know 90% of the ideas were "throw-aways," but one thing feeds on the other, and once you get the electricity going, its like the rest of the restaurant goes silent and you don't hear anything or anyone else! You ignore the waitress, and you are just completely into creating. And before you know it, the character has a life… they're real.

The other thing that we kept in mind when designing Ninjak is that Valiant is an amazingly patient company. They like to wait for the best ideas possible, so they design their characters so that they are more "real world" so to speak. When Bob asked me to design Ninjak, he said "don't go crazy and give me those big X-Men shoulder pads and all that sort of stuff. Make him believable… so that if someone someday wanted to make a Ninjak movie, it would be possible… So that if a fan wanted to dress up as Ninjak, it could be done easily. It is actually my favorite way to design a character. It makes it easier to draw. Again, everything is "real world."

How do you make a character that is apparently a combination of Bruce Lee, Sherlock Holmes, Doc Savage, James Bond, and Batman?

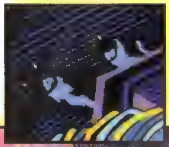
He's not so much Doc Savage. More like Bruce Lee and James Bond with a healthy dose of Sherlock Holmes and Batman. John Hartz is a real aficionado on Bruce Lee's history.

We were talking about John's theories on Bruce Lee's death. John suggested that Bruce Lee may have lost face in certain parts of the martial arts community because he had learned the various martial arts systems and then tried to improve on the systems that supposedly were impossible to improve upon. So, even though Lee expanded the art form, some didn't really like him for it. That's where the conspiracy of murder comes into play.

In some ways it's like that with Ninjak too. He's taught a system of martial arts that is perfect, and yet he was able to improve on it. But it's that kind of thing that eventually causes him problems.

As far as the James Bond component, that one is pretty obvious. Colin King is the very suave, British millionaire. I do know what he does for a living, but I can't tell you, because that's another big secret that they we won't be divulging for a while. I can say that he works for the weaponeer and gets paid quite a healthy sum for the work… and he's a real ladies man.

That's another way he is very much like James Bond, The Sherlock Holmes contribution is also obvious. Ninjack is an amazing detective who keeps unbelievably extensive files on everybody. He is so brilliant in fact that his adversary Dr. Silk



© DC Comics

(who has the greatest computer brain in the Valiant Universe), can still be outwitted and pestered by Ninjak. He can get his portable lap-top computer and order plane tickets and charge them to Silk and Silk can't figure out where the bills are coming from!

Ninjak is a master of all trades. Silk is just as brilliant, but he just can't figure out who Ninjak is, and that's the one thing that really gets to him. Ninjak will just "tease" him with little things like plane tickets or hotel reservations… all billed to Silk. It's like the fly somewhere in the spider's web, but the spider just can't seem to find the fly.

Will you be working on any other projects?

No, we pretty much have a gentleman's agreement that I'm going to give Ninjak 100% of my attention, and I want to stick to that. When I started in this industry, I never got to fully pencil the Ray series and it is still something that bothers me to this day. On the Azrael series, DC was quite lenient with me and they were really great about it, and they allowed me to finish it and the book shipped late.

But I love those guys for their patience. With X-Factor, again I penciled very few complete issues and this is all because I was just tapping into too many projects at one time. So I don't want to make the same mistake with Ninjak. If I find that I can't finish penciling Ninjak on time, It may be Nature's way of telling me that I was not meant to do a monthly book.

But, I'm going to give Ninjak my 100% college try. Plus the fact that I hate letting the fans down too. If they are expecting me to be on a book, I really want to be there for them. I just don't want to come out with just one book a year and then just disappear and cash my checks and end up on some Tahitian island with an umbrella in my drink. (Laughter)

I think timing is really important. Take 'the Todd' for example. With a lot of the anti-image sentiment that some fans have, they'll always exclude Todd Mcfarlane from that because he keeps his schedule and does a good job. Erik Larsen too. Those guys are coming out with a great product and I think it shows that they care about what they're doing, they care about their characters, and they care about the fans. I want to do the same thing.

Is it easier for you to work with the smaller comic book publishers?

Well, it makes it a little easier to go to the top guy. I don't really have the nerve to call up Terry Stewart at Marvel and say "Hey Terry, lets have lunch and talk about this." Although Terry might be up for it, I don't have the fortitude to do that. But at Valiant it is a little bit easier. Mark Moretti and I get together and work out plots (or actually he works it out and I'll come in with suggestions or omissions on things).

Mark is one of the most underrated and best unknown writers I know, but I don't think he'll be unknown after Ninjak. I've read some of the early pages that he's written, and they are incredible! After I read his first three issues of *Eternal Warrior* (they were great), I asked Bob to introduce me to the guy who did it. I told him that it was the closest thing to Frank Miller's storytelling and writing style that I'd seen in a long time.

One last question Joe. Are there any Valiant issue that CBM readers should be looking for?

I can give you one hint. Tell your readers to make sure to hold on to their *Harbinger* #25s, because that book is going to be very important!

Thanks for sharing your time with CBM readers.

As always, it was a pleasure! ■

Cash Paid For Historic "Ashcans!"

Do you have an unidentifiable comic with an odd black & white cover and color interior?

It may be an historic "ashcan!"

In the early days of comic book publishing, there was a never-ending battle between highly competitive businessmen to lay claim to every conceivable comic book title. In order to properly register the title with the copyright office in Washington DC, publication of the book was required.

In the heat of competition, crafty comic book publishers developed a system to fool the government into believing that the book had been produced. They produced "ashcan" comics! These "imposters" existed only for legal registration and were never sold.

"Ashcans" usually had black and white covers (often Velox prints) stapled to color interiors from previously printed comics.

One "ashcan" comic was rushed to the copyright office in Washington DC to register the title and logo art. Another was placed in the publisher's files. Often extra "ashcans" were made and given to editors and other employees as souvenirs. Sometimes these rarities surface in today's comics collector marketplace.

Recently signed and numbered limited edition "ashcans" have appeared on the collectors market. Though highly desirable, these modern-day collectibles are not traditional "ashcan" editions.

Genuine historical "ashcans" are by definition among the rarest of comic books.

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Fiasco in Philly... Not!

A Report by Gary E. Bishop

Attendance - I'm writing this report one week after ComicFest '93 held in Philadelphia on October 9-12. This convention, now billed "The largest convention in the country with over 31,000 people attending", did not turn out to be the bomb that some expected. In fact it was a very well attended first show. I myself would only estimate attendance at 15-17,000 people, but I admit I was not privy to the method by which attendance was tabulated.

Sales - Show promoters did their jobs well and really brought in the general public as well as collectors. The con was a standard show on Friday with steady but not sensational sales. This also seemed to be the day that collectors attended. Saturday was a very hectic day with business being very brisk with not many large sales but many, many small sales.

Special Guests - Todd McFarlane was signing on Saturday and the crowd was big. The Convention staff had not arranged a number system for line control until Sunday, so many waited in line all day. Sunday was a typical day for a show being slightly less in sales and attendance than Saturday. Monday's attendance was way down, as were sales.

As a collector of artwork and sketches, I looked forward to seeing some of my favorite professionals. I was disappointed that a good portion of the guests listed in flyers did not attend. And those that did, were absent on Monday. Sure, it was wonderful to meet greats like John Romita Sr., but it was a disappointment to see so many guests not show.

I was also concerned by the program designer's decision to list guests in order of popularity. It appeared as if guests were categorized into four different popularity levels... and they actually listed this level on the guests badges. A number of the guests that I spoke to said they were legitimately upset by this policy.

There was a fee for the Harlan Ellison and Jim Shooter seminars, but all of that money went to the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund. I didn't mind these fees because I felt the money went to a good cause.

The Debate - I was unable to attend the "debate" between Todd McFarlane and Peter David, but those who did attend reported that it went off fairly well. No punches were given, physically that is, but many were bestowed verbally. From what I have heard, nothing was really settled and it may require a second round next year to settle the matter.

Overall - I would consider the convention a success. They had a very good attendance for a first time show, and sales were good. It also appeared that the general public had a good time. Any problems that were present this time will, no doubt, be worked out before their next show. I look forward to the next two shows. They are planning one in NYC in June 1994 and another in Philly in October 1994. Good luck to ComicFest and it's continued growth.

A Report by Lee Hestor

I don't know if the ComicFest was the biggest comic convention ever held in the United States (as billed), but it was definitely well attended. Things got off to a slow start at the trade show. I was told that less than 400 dealers attended.

By the start of the weekend, however, fans packed the aisles, and dealers reported brisk sales. Fans lined up to see the Batmobile and the Spawn Mobile. Characters such as Spawn, Flaxen, Spider-Man, Bedrock, and Mr. T roamed the aisles to the delight of onlookers.

The convention was advertised heavily in the media, and as a result, many new fans were attracted to the show. For me, the Gumby Museum was one of the highlights of the show. It featured an incredible array of original sets used in the filming of the Gumby cartoons. The detail and creativity that went into these sets is incredible.

In Artist Alley, I ran into Tom Taggart. He does covers, mostly for DC. He had some of his multi media works on display. They are beautiful, and wildly creative. Look for his covers on *Doom Patrol*, and other Vertigo books. I believe that we will be hearing a lot from Tom in the future. Hundreds of eager fans lined up to get their Marvel Masterpiece cards signed. Art dealers who had Jusko original Masterpieces were getting $1500, and up. "Wolverine Vs. Sabretooth" went for $5000 at a Sotheby's auction.

While at the Philadelphia convention, I surveyed a goodly number of major dealers. I wanted to see what you can expect to pay, in cash, if you want certain highly desired "key" books. For the sake of consistency, I took the liberty of approximating the grade on each book, while it was still in its mylar, as best as I could. Despite this limitation, in almost all cases I down-graded the book from what the dealer had it at. So here is the actual cash price that you, the consumer, can expect to pay for the following books in the following grades (graded by yours truly). You'll notice that high grade, "key" books are difficult to obtain at any price.

The Philadelphia convention was generally a good time for all. Most of the dealers and fans reported an enjoyable (and in many cases) profitable con. But as with all comic book conventions, the final criteria of evaluation boils down to just three things: Did the convention provide the opportunity to meet new friends and see old ones? Did the convention provide the opportunity to meet interesting artists, writers, and other comic book professionals? And most importantly, did the convention provide the opportunity to fill some of those critical holes in your want list? In the case of ComicFest '93, the answer to all three is a resounding yes! ■

Lee's Silver Age/Golden Age Convention Survey

Title & Issue	FR	GD	VG	FN
Amazing Fantasy #15	$400	$800	$2,000	$4,000
Amazing Spider-Man #1	$500	$1,000		
Avengers #1		$175	$480	$1,000
Brave & Bold #28		$350		
Brave & Bold #34			$750	
Detective #38			$10,000	
Fantastic Four #1	$600	$1,400		
Fantastic Four #5		$250		
Flash #105		$560	$1,500	
Incredible Hulk #1	$800		$1,900*	
Journey Into Mystery #83		$600		
MAD #1			$1,000	
Showcase #4		$2,200*		
Showcase #22	$275			
Strange Tales #110				$375
Strange Tales #115			$350	
Tales of Suspense #39	$250		$500	$1,500
Tales to Astonish #27		$350		
X-Men #1	$180			

*** indicates restored books.**

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Avengers #16 VF- 65.00
Captain America #100 NM- 325.00
Captain America #102 NM- 40.00
Captain America #110 NM+ 55.00
Captain America #111 NM 55.00
Captain America #113 NM- 55.00
Challengers #6 VF+ 325.00
Conan #1 W/ BWS Autograph NM+ 225.00
Creeper #1 NM+ 50.00
80 page giant #1 VF+ 210.00
80 page giant #4 NM w/printing defect 80.00
80 page giant #5 (small ink smudges otherwise NM) 70.00
80 page giant #6 (small ink smudges otherwise VF) 49.00
Fantastic Four #49 FN 50.00
Fantastic Four Annual #1 NM 125.00
Flash annual #1 VF 179.00
Green Lantern #4 VF- (ad) 200.00
Green Lantern #8 FN/VF 90.00
Green Lantern #19 VF- 75.00
Hawk & Dove #1 VF/NM 50.00
Hawkman #4 NM 125.00
House of mystery #76 (Lt foxing on bc otherwise VF/NM) 40.00
House of Secrets #14 VF 60.00
Journey into mystery #85 VF- 250.00
Journey into mystery #86 VF 190.00
Journey into mystery #87 FN 75.00
Journey into mystery #89 VF+ 135.00
Journey into mystery #105 VF- 40.00
Journey into mystery #106 VF- 40.00
Journey into mystery #108 VF- 40.00
Journey into mystery #110 VF/NM 50.00
Marvel Super Heroes #1 NM+ 75.00
Marvel Super Heroes #12 VF/NM 125.00
Marvel Super Heroes #13 VF+ 45.00
Metal Men #1 NM- 350.00
Metal Men #2 VF- 90.00
Metal Men #7 VF+ 40.00
Metal Men #9 VF 40.00
Metal Men #11 FN- 15.00
Metal Men #12 VF+ 30.00
Metal Men #14 VF- 28.00
Metal Men #15 VF- 28.00
Metal Men #16 FN/VF 23.00
Metal Men #19 VF 55.00
Metamorpho #1 VF- 55.00
My Greatest Adventure #13 FN+ 65.00
My Greatest Adventure #81 FN/VF 55.00
Mystery In Space #11 FN/VF 145.00
Mystery In Space #41 FN- 15.00
Mystery In Space #64 FN 45.00
Mystery In Space #87 VG/FN 40.00
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Sea Devils #2 FN+ 75.00
Sgt. Fury #13 NM+ 150.00
Sgt. Fury #24 VG+ 10.00
Sgt. Fury Special #3 NM- 20.00
Sgt. Fury Special #4 NM+ 15.00
Nick Fury #1 VF/NM 40.00
Showcase #11 FN- 200.00
Showcase #20 VF 425.00
Showcase #28 (date stamp on FC otherwise VF/NM) 275.00
Showcase #32 VF- 175.00
Showcase #34 GD 100.00
Showcase #34 VF- 900.00
Showcase #38 (date stamp on FC otherwise VF/NM) 275.00
Showcase #50 FN- 20.00
Showcase #51 VF- 30.00
Showcase #53 VF+ 40.00
Showcase #54 FN+ 25.00
Showcase #56 VG/FN 25.00
Showcase #57 VG 20.00
Showcase #58 FN/VF 40.00
Showcase #60 VF/NM 150.00
Showcase #61 FN- 40.00
Strange Tales #111 (small VI on FC, otherwise NM) 175.00
Strange Tales #113 VF- 60.00
Strange Tales #122 FN/VF 26.00
Strange Tales #129 VF+ 32.00
Strange Tales Annual #2 VF/NM 375.00
Sub-Mariner #1 FN 55.00
Tales of Suspense #40 VF- 600.00
Tales of Suspense #42 VF/NM 200.00
Tales of Suspense #48 VF- 110.00
Tales of Suspense #52 VG/F 40.00
Tales of Suspense #63 FN- 75.00
Tales to Astonish #37 NM+ 225.00
Tales to Astonish #38 NM+ 225.00
Tales to Astonish #39 NM+ 225.00
Tales to Astonish #40 VF/NM 200.00
Tales to Astonish #41 VF 100.00
Tales to Astonish #43 VF/NM 120.00
Tales to Astonish #45 VF 70.00
Tales to Astonish #46 NM 100.00
Tales to Astonish #47 VF+ 75.00
Tales to Astonish #48 (small stamped AD, VF/NM) 85.00
Tales to Astonish #49 VF+ 100.00
Tales to Astonish #50 NM- 65.00
Tales to Astonish #52 NM- 65.00
Tales to Astonish #53 VF 45.00
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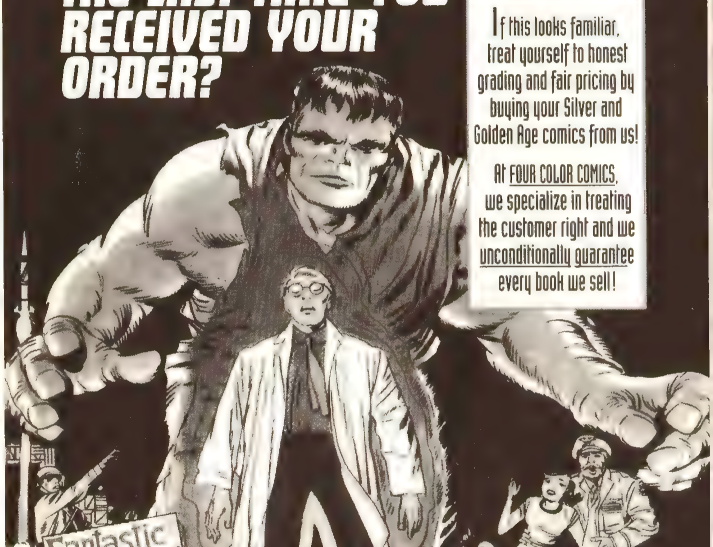

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The HIGHEND™ Market Report

Editors Note: Joe Mannarino is the consultant to Christie's Comic Collectible Auctions, knows most of the major collectors in the country, and is a long time collector himself. These put Joe in a unique position to keep the CBM readers informed and up to date about the what goes on in "high end" collectibles market.

Passion, envy, lust, affection, regret, remorse, yearning, salaciousness, craving, longing, agony, ecstasy, respect, vehemence, ardor, jealousy, and wrath. Sound exciting? These are just a few of the emotions experienced daily atop the world of Comic Collectibles. The vast majority of collectors are seldom privy to what goes on inside this world as it's participants protect information as a closely guarded secret, because even a tidbit of insider information may (and often does) translate into an eventual prize.

Surprisingly, wealth is not a prerequisite to play the game. In fact, many of the finest items are acquired with very little "liquid cash". Instead most acquisitions are the result of research, strategy, creativeness, and most of all, market "savvy!" Part of that savvy is to know what was purchased, what was sold… and what was traded!

Acquired: A VFN (CGSA 60) *Marvel Mystery* #1 sold on the Pacific Comic Exchange for $55,000 including buyers commission. Also sold on the Exchange; a slightly restored VG-FN (CGSA 30) *Action* #1 for $24,200 and a *Tales of Suspense* #39 in NM (CGSA 80)- for $4,400.

Four Color Comics and Metropolis Collectibles have combined on a few transactions, recently purchasing a high grade collection of Timelys consisting of misc. issues of *Marvel Mystery, Captain America,* and *Human Torch.* Sales include *Young Allies* #1 $4,000 and *Sub-Mariner* #1 VF- $3,800, the two also jointly sold *Showcase* #4 FN $7,000 and #13 VF $2,000. The Mile High run of *Hit* with those classic Lou Fine covers found a new home, the deal was a long time in the making.

Original Art: In original art there was a Burroughs bonanza at San Diego as seven Hogarth Tarzans from '42 and '43 were unearthed and sold mainly to dealers, followed by a rare and historic J. Allen St. John original oil selling for $45,000 to a private collector. The image was originally used for the McClurg 1928 first edition and is considered the definitive Tarzan and Burroughs. St. John is considered the best Tarzan and Burroughs illustrator. His work has influenced numerous artists, including Frank Frazetta.

Speaking of Frazetta, Alexander Gallery of New York had a dazzling sale of unique pieces featuring several pen and ink vignettes by Frazetta for $25,000.

Alex Acevedo of Alexander Gallery shocked the underground art market by purchasing (from noted art historian and author Rick Marschall) the original art to Robert Crumb's classic, "A Short History of America" for $35,000. The four page story first appeared in 1979 in "Co-evolution Quarterly", and has appeared in a variety of forms from comic books to posters. Acevedo has accumulated a huge collection of "underground artist" Robert Crumb, and will feature the artist's work in an extensive retrospective beginning November 1st at his Manhattan Gallery.

Bartered: A VF+ copy of *Fantastic Four* #1 lightly cleaned, exchanged hands at San Diego for $17,000. The real question is how much early Marvel original art will the New York collector have to give up in order to keep the book.

In a large cash/trade deal, Harry Matetsky (author of "The Adventures of Superman Collecting") acquired the original cover art to three Golden Age gems: *Whiz* #17, *America's Greatest Comics* #3, and *Captain Marvel Adventures* #2.

Mired: A large package deal of original comic strip art, including a rare 1939 Hal Foster Prince Valiant, has hit a snag. In escrow awaiting final payment is a VF (CGSA 68) *Amazing Fantasy* #15 at Pacific Comic Exchange, Inc.

Events: By the time you read this, the second annual Christie's Comic Collectible sale will have happened. With over 450 lots of prime material there is sure to be some excitement. We look forward to bringing you up to date sales results from this and other prominent collectibles auctions.

See you next issue!

Have you been involved in a major transaction recently? If you'd care to have it included in our "Collecting At The Top" market report, drop us a line. Send your information to:
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By Joe Mannarino

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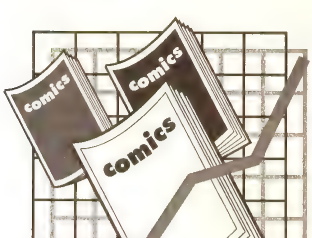

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(704) 687-7005

Hot Current Comics - *Catwoman* has started to claw her way to the top. *Batman* still sells relatively well, but has been dramatically slowing.

In the Marvel Universe, *Daredevil* (Fall from Grace storyline) is a very good seller, with #319 & #320 selling for $10 a piece and *Man Without Fear* #1 selling for $5. *Wolverine* #75 and *X-Men* #25 (both with holographic covers) are both immediate sellouts. Other than this, there's not much to report in the comic book line.

Cards - The hottest thing to hit so far is the Marvel Masterpiece II. These boxes are selling for $52.50 a box, the sets for $25, and the specialty cards for $10.

Well, that's about if for now, see you next month!

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Current Age - DC: DC attempted a one-two punch, shipping *Batman* #500 and *Superman* #82 on consecutive weeks. Despite all the hype, *Batman* #500 sold fewer numbers than we thought it would; as of this writing, we still have copies on the shelf for cover price. Perhaps returning Bruce Wayne to an albeit changed Batman role came too soon. Both "Knightquest" and the current *Superman* story line have failed to keep the attention generated by the "death" and "rebirth" of DC's main heroes; sales have slowed and could drop to "pre-change" numbers by the end of the year. In terms of the Vertigo line, we wonder why DC hasn't considered doing a second trade paperback of *Hellblazer*. The first collection, covering issues #1-9, came out last year. I've spoken to many who would love to get into reading *Hellblazer*, but find it difficult to get back issues, especially those between issues 10 and 30. One or even two more collections would solve this problem. There are already five *Sandman* collections, so let's have more *Hellblazer*!

Marvel - "Heavy Hitters" titles *Sachs & Violens* and *Alien Legion* did well, the former due to a strong creative team (Peter David and George Perez) and the latter because of its established readership. The remainder of the "Heavy Hitters" titles failed to impress our customers as was confirmed by sales figures. Ditto the "Frontier" mature readers titles. The UK line is sinking like a stone; we order 3-5 copies of each title and hope to sell out! I feel Marvel should cancel these titles before dropping *Conan*, which they will do after issue #275. One bright note: Frank Miller's *Man Without Fear*; it sells double the regular *Daredevil* numbers, easily.

Valiant - Now that the "blue" cover issues of *Deathmate* have arrived, and sat on the shelves, I have noticed a trend in the overall *Deathmate* sales. Sales were highest in the *Deathmate* prologue which contained both Valiant and Image art and sported a cover price of $1.95. *Deathmate* "yellow", with a $4.95 cover price, sold only 55% of the prologue issue, while *Deathmate* "blue" is down 20% from *Deathmate* "yellow" numbers. The much touted *Doctor Mirage* #1 had only moderate sales, with sales on issue #2 dropping by 35%. Back issue sales have slowed across the board, including those once hard to find pre-Unity books.

Image - Does anyone know where the "black" and "red" cover *Deathmate* issues are? These books were supposed to ship in July with their Valiant counterparts. And does anyone really care at this point? Sales on all Image titles are dropping; even *Spawn*'s numbers are starting to decline

Cartoon Books - A couple of issues back I spoke of *Bone* as being a book on the rise. Don't say I didn't warn you. I have yet to be able to buy, at any price, a first printing of issue #1. Demand for all issues, regardless of printing, continues with no end in sight. Hats off to Cartoon Books for keeping all issues of *Bone* in print, and for doing a trade paperback of issues #1-6. Many other publishers could learn something here. First, create a demand for your books; second, fill that demand by keeping your books in print, whether through later printings of all issues or through compilations.

Adhesive Comics - Haven't heard of these guys? Keep listening, because you will. I picked up copies of *Jab* and *Too Much Coffee Man* at San Diego, brought them back to my stores, and immediately sold out of them. *Jab* #3 is especially hilarious with its authentic .22 caliber bullet hole through the book; many of the stories incorporate the jagged hole into the action.

Fantagraphics - *Hate*, by Peter Bagge, is soon to be made into a 2 hour motion picture by Colossal Pictures. Bagge will also be doing work for *Liquid Television*. This will help build to the already increasing attention that this great title is receiving. Peter Kuper is another Fantagraphics artist who is getting a great deal of serious mainstream attention. He does a monthly cartoon for the New Yorker. If you are looking for more customers, and thus more profits, make sure to stock the entire Fantagraphics line.

Defiant - The first issue of the *Plasm* comic has shipped, and my last minute decision to cut my order by 1/3 paid off; less than 50 copies have sold in four weeks. Despite several missteps, Defiant numbers will, most likely, creep upwards in the future. The titles are well crafted and are well received by many people who like super hero books

Malibu - The Ultraverse continues to hold steady. New issues sell in the low Marvel numbers.

Dark Horse - Despite the absence of any one "hot" title, Dark Horse continues to sell in the mid Marvel numbers. Even licensed books such as *Aliens vs Predator* and *Robocop* have slowed.

Topps - The quality of the Topps Comics is commendable. However, they must take pains to make sure that they can get them out on a reasonable schedule. Overall, they are a welcome relief in a marketplace dominated by publishers who seem content to fight it out over the same few superhero customers

In Conclusion - It's great to hear all the feedback from readers of the Market Reports. Don't forget to say - "I Observed it in Overstreet!"

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New Comics - Valiant: What was once a mighty machine is starting to slow down. Our new issue sales of Valiant books have calmed from the frenzy of a few months ago. Now we can see what some of these books actually sell for, without the rushed urgency to buy, so common until recently. *Rai and the Future Force* and *Shadowman* seem to be the hottest of the current issues and *Turok* seems to be right on their tails. *Bloodsbot* remains a strong seller, as does *Doctor Mirage*, *Solar*, and *Harbinger*. Definitely look for *Ninjak* #1, for it will be very hot, as will *Secret Weapons* #5, *X-O Manowar* #25, *Armoirines* #0, and *Magnus* #33 with Ivar the Timewalker.

Ultraverse: This imprint continues to completely amaze me with its sales, especially after I had written them off before they even came out. *Sludge* #1 with the first part of Barry Windsor-Smith's *Rune* came out last week and it was received with much success, as will the rest of the Rune series. *Prime*, *Hardcase*, and all of the others sell extremely well as new issues, and *Solitaire* #1 should be pretty hot.

Marvel: Old reliable continues to crank out. The ever-popular mutant books are even more popular than ever with both of the *X-Men*'s doing very well. *Wolverine* is back in the land of the living, especially after #75. *Deadpool* and *Sabretooth* are also being fairly lively. The *2099* titles are showing a little more life than before, as are all of the Spider-titles (still constant sellers, just not quite as much as before). Far and away the hottest Marvel title for us right now is *Daredevil*. This success could be attributed to the "Fall From Grace" storyline as well as the *Man Without Fear* mini-series from Frank Miller. These storylines pick up more readers each issue. Marvel UK: scrap it!

Defiant: More credit is definitely due to Jim Shooter for creative storytelling. The *Warriors of Plasm* is wonderfully written and sells great, and it seems to pick up more readers each issue. Anticipation is up for *Dark Dominion* (as well as the cards and album) and also for *The Good Guys*. Defiant readers will want copies of *Doctor Chaos* #1 from Triumphant as well as whatever book finishes off the inside image of the first appearance of *War Dancer*. This "non-crossover" is definitely an original idea and it seems that it will go over well.

DC: *Batman*, *Superman*, and a little bit of *Vertigo*, that's all that we can sell from DC right now. Both *Batman* and *Detective* are still on their high from "Knightfall" and all of the *Superman* titles sell as they should. And the future looks like more of the same.

Dark Horse: The *Comic's Greatest World* series finished off well and we expect continued sales on all of the ongoing series which come from it. Look for the upcoming "Legend" imprint to become fairly hot. Because Dark Horse is basically a more intelligent and creative version of Image, we feel that they will be more successful in the long run. This due in part to the fact that veterans like Miller, Adams, Mignola, and Byrne all know how to put out a good book and also how to put it out on time. Frank Miller's *Sin City: A Dame to Kill For* looks promising.

Image: Whatever happened to their half of the biggest crossover of the Summer, *Deathmate*? We feel this is a poor plan to put as many books out as late as they do. This appears to be causing a wave of anger with collectors (and dealers as well). Possibly because many never know when another one of their books is going to come out. And what about *Image* #0. Still can't help but be amused over that little line they printed in one of the final coupon books which said that the issue date would be delayed on account of "the painstaking effort of all of the artists involved". If this is really the case then we will have some truly amazing art on our hands when (and if) this book ever comes out. *Spawn* and *Cyberforce* seem to be the only titles which people in our area even look forward to anymore.

Recent Back Issues - What we have here is an overall decrease in the amount of back issues sales due to the glut of new books on the market. The prevailing mood which is driving any one book seems to die down after a few weeks time as the customers move on to whatever new book catches their fancy. On to some sales…

Valiant: No longer do the pre-Unity books fly out and no longer are the prices as bloated as they once were. For all of you who wanted to read these great books which spawned such an enormous explosion in prices and demand, the next couple of months would be the time to get them as the prices start to level off. The hottest two Valiant back issues here are *Bloodshot* #'s 6 and 7 with the first two appearances of Ninjak. Number 6 goes for $6 and #7 for $6 as well. Sales include: *Archer and Armstrong* #8 at $8; *Solar* #1 at $25 and multiple #2's at $4 each; *X-O Manowar* #1 at $37, #12 at $5, and some #0's at $4; *Shadowman* #1 at $27 and #16 at $6.

Marvel: The only real hot books here are any of the *Daredevil* issues from the "Fall of Grace" storyline and the new *X-Men* series back issues. *Daredevil* #319's go for $5 each and the rest of the parts are at least $3. All of the "excitement" over the *Magneto* stuff (#0 at $5 and *X-Men Unlimited* #2 at $5) has picked up *X-Men* interest with repeated sales of #2 at $4, #3 at $3.50, and most everything else from #4 to #9 at $3 each.

DC and Dark Horse: Absolutely nothing exciting here at all.

Defiant: *Warriors of Plasm* #1's sell well at $3.50 and #2's go for $3.

Ultraverse: *Prime*, *Hardcase*, and *Strangers* #1's are all at $4 each, and #2's are at $5. Everything else goes for a little over cover and sells rather briskly.

Image: It's *Spawn* or nothing. The prices have dropped some on all of *Spawn* issues with #'s 1, 2, and 3 at $6, #4 at $8, and #5 at $4. All of the other issues sell right at cover and do well.

Enjoy comics, keep reading and we'll see you next month!

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Hello, welcome to another comic report! This month I have a report from one of the most active comic shops in Manitoba - the Comic Factory II, 380 Donald, (204) 957-1978. The owner (Ferd) and manager (Kim) have a great business. Ferd Bernjak travels extensively and brings a lot of Golden Age, Silver Age, and rarer wants into our city. Although Ferd did not expand on his Golden/Silver Age report this time; he has promised to give a full "prices realized" report next time. Well, on with the show…

Marvel - Recent trends indicate that the once mighty Marvel has hit a slump, remarkably similar to the one that led to the DC implosion of the mid-seventies. Interest in Marvel "hot" titles is fading fast here, with customer feedback indicating that they are buying many of the Marvel titles out of habit and that they no longer enjoy, or even read, many of these books. I feel the situation is made worse by enhanced covers, card inserts, and chase comics which are, more and more, drawing complaints from customers as they fork over the extra cash for these "special" books. The extra expense is convincing many of our "habit buyers" that the time has come to re-evaluate their purchase selections.

While interest in many of the old guard is on the wane (with mutant and *Punisher* titles not exempt), interest here in most of the new Marvel product is non-existent "from the get go." Marvel's UK titles, as a group, sell poorly. With only a few notable exceptions, (such as *Trouble with Girls* and *Lawdog*), the Heavy Hitters line has been a luke warm seller here. There is still some of the initial interest remaining in most of the *2099* titles, and these remain viable sellers for the present. This, however, is not the case with the majority of the second string titles in the Marvel Universe proper. With each issue, sales drop on titles such as *Secret Defenders* and *Terror Inc.* and, if this downward trend continues, I predict that these titles, and a slew of others like them, will very soon be so unsalable as to fall below the three copy order minimum our distributor requires.

An opinion regarding Marvel: At the moment, it seems that the future of Marvel Comics could be disturbingly grim. One perspective is that the company continues to flood the market with titles that don't, and won't, sell, possibly on the belief that hype will sell anything. If a major shakeup does not soon occur, I believe that mighty Marvel's multi year dominance of the comic market may become a thing of the past.

Image - For a company that promised so much and entered the market with such a splash, Image's showing of late has been less than expected. We are cutting orders on new Image products. New comic orders are cut ten to twenty percent from the current quantity required, in anticipation of still more subscribers "dumping" their Image books. Every week we haul new Image titles out of

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the shipping boxes with acute dread, knowing that the quantities we have received, (often late), will be in excess of what we can sell. If late shipping at Image continues, I think the whole company could go down, regardless of the popularity of its artists.

DC - The two biggest DC sellers these past months have, far and away, been the *Batman* and *Superman* titles. In fact, the titles tied in to the "Reign of the Supermen" and "Knightfall" storylines have been the best consistent sellers this Summer, period. The quality of art and story invested in the *Superman* titles seems to have paid off in a continued interest (even with the storyline over). But interest in the "Knightfall" peaked prematurely with *Batman* #497, and was all but dead here by the time *Batman* #500 went on sale. Our shop considers itself fortunate to have "sold through" the majority of our copies of *Batman* #500. Several other shops in our area have reported that they have as much as half of their original order still unsold, more than a month after the book's release.

In addition to these "mega-hyped" series, DC's policy of producing specialty titles that appeal to smaller, but dedicated, interest groups continues to work for them, with these titles doing small but consistent numbers. However, DC's recent success may be "going to its head"; word has it that (regrettably) several other "old time" DC characters are now scheduled to undergo major changes.

Valiant - The sales on Valiant titles have plummeted here, with the more recent titles, such as *Hard Corps, Turok,* and *Rai & the Future Force* leading the downward plunge. Even such highly touted books as *X-O Manowar* #0 sold significantly fewer copies than anticipated. The declining sales of new Valiant books has adversely affected the back issue market here; the "rare" early issues only sell if heavily discounted.

Malibu - The surprise sellers of the Summer were the Ultraverse titles which had a strong start out of the gate, with *Prime* and *Mantra* being particularly good sellers for us. However, we feel that the marketing of this new line could have been better because most of our customers failed to request Ultraverse books prior to publication and decided to pick them up only when the actual product was on the stands. As a result, we attempted to re-stock the early issues several times to compensate for a lower original order. Time will tell if this strong start will continue.

Dark Horse - Our Dark Horse titles continue to sell largely to a special group of "Dark Horse collectors", with the notable exceptions of the *Aliens* and *Predator* titles. The much heralded *Comic's Greatest World* line has largely fizzled here with some subscribers canceling with only two or three issues remaining.

Back Issues - Golden Age always sells quickly, especially high/medium grade copies. but only to the special customers. Silver Age DC's are solid sellers in any grade above good, while Marvel's from the same period are extremely common and do not sell. The market for recent back issues is largely dead, and 95% of this material is virtually unsalable at a shop level and sells well only through mail order or conventions.

That's all for this report, until next time.

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Back issues are back! Disillusioned collectors, fed up with the new comics glut, continue the recent surge of interest in older 'classics' and volume is way up! This is in contrast to the seasonal down-turn of new comics sales.

Golden Age - Recent sales: *All Flash* #12 PR $17.75; *All-Star* #48 PR $22.50; *All-Star* #43 FR/GD $65; *More Fun Comics* #105 (Fifth app. Superboy) GD/VG $37.75; *Adventure Comics* #242 VG $87.50.

Silver Age - A lot of activity! Recent sales: *Tales of Suspense* #39 (Origin & 1st Iron Man) VG $640; *Fantastic Four* #48 (1st Silver Surfer and Galactus) NM $380; *Fantastic Four* #9 PR $17; *Flash* #106 VG $99.75; *Green Lantern* #3 GD $17.50, #40 (1st Crisis) GD $64.75; *Daredevil* #11 GD $14; *Amazing Spider-Man* #92 MT $21. A recent acquisition of note: *Amazing Spider-Man* #1 GD.

Modern Age - Also very busy. Notable recent sales: *Amazing Spider-Man* #300 MT $55; *Batman-Sword of Azrael* #1 TPB Platinum MT $50; *Magnus* (Valiant) MT $40; *Dark Horse Presents* #24 MT $30.

Marvel - *Siege of Darkness* is generating absolutely no interest in pre-paying according to Marvel's market plan, so we're tracking each customers' purchases the same way we did on the *Magneto* #0, one sold book at a time.

DC - *Superman* is still hot, in fact he is outselling the *Batman* "Knightquest" issues, which is doing well also. We hear a lot of praise for the directions DC has taken editorially.

Image - In full freefall in both new and back issue sales. All consumer confidence has been lost here with late shipping, and their actions have impacted some other independents. Books with coupons generate very little interest, everyone is still grumbling about the Image coupon book still lost in limbo.

Valiant - With no recent hot books, Valiant is starting to drop across the board to pre-Unity levels.

Cards - The Marvel Masterpieces Series II looks to be another success. There has been a lot of talk about short allocations, but we were pleased with the quantity we received. Initial sales are very strong. That about wraps it up in the Ozarks.

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Once again it is time for a market report from Southern Indiana. I should start with the observation that comics in general, old and new, seem to be selling very well.

Silver Age - These continue to sell very well. The highest demand is for key issues in high grade, but lower grade books that are reasonable in price sell almost as quickly. The market in this area is dominated by Marvel collectors, but in mail order, 10, 12, & 15 cent cover price DCs disappear as soon, (or even before) they are listed. I have also noted an increase in requests for superhero books by the "other" publishers, titles like *Judomaster, Peacemaker, Son of Vulcan,* and the like. These books are very inexpensive for their age, and collectors are warming up to them. Now if I just had more to sell.

70's Comics - Interest is way up on a lot of titles, a few of note are, in no particular order: *Nova* (Rumors of a new series), *Kamandi, Demon,* and most of Kirby's DC books, with the first few Kirby *Jimmy Olsen's* selling in the $20 range, *Son of Satan,* and many more. Most key 70's books are still very affordable, many under $25, so the wise collector/investor is buying nice copies whenever they appear.

New Comics - As I have mentioned before, Valiant's, particularly pre-Unity, continue to sell very well in this area. The books in the $100 range are slow, but the rest sell quickly. The June Previews with the *Plasm* #0 sells in the $12-15 range here. And it was nice to see *X-O Manowar* finally move up in price, since it has been selling, for some time now, in the $24-40 range.

Until next month, may the holes in your want list be filled!

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Welcome back, Overstreet people! As promised, here is part two of our post-San Diego report. Say no more! Excalibur!

Golden Age - We sold our third copy of *Mary Marvel* #1 in VF for $400. This has a great looking cover and is an undervalued Fawcett key, and heartily recommended. Also, we sold an *Adventure Comics* #41 in FN- for a bargain, pay-the-bills price of $600.

Silver Age - Still our main money area of sales. Recent examples include: *World's Finest* #159 in FN for $4, a *Classics Illustrated* HRN 67-5/66 in GD+ for a staggering $1.50 (we find that strict guide and low prices are the only way to sell these reprinted turkeys!), an *Avengers* #1 in VG for a bargain $300, and a #20 in FR for $5, a mess of low-grade *Nick Fury, Agent of Shield,* #'s 6, 9, 10, 11, & 12 for a bargain $12 to a lucky collector, a PR copy of *Tales to Astonish* #101 to a completist for $1, a *Turok, Son of Stone* #5 in NM for an overguide $125, a *Metal Men* #19 in GD for a discounted $3, and a *Flash* #137 in FN- for $125.

Bronze Age - Recent sales in this area include: a *Flash* #231 in GD and a *DC Comics Presents* #28 in NM for $1 @, a *Conan* #105 in NM for $1, and a *Captain America* #145 in GD+ for $2.

Modern Age - We're starting to move more of these than the Bronze *Continued on page 32*

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CALL FOR OTHERS

Continued from page 28 books. Sales include: a *John Byrne's 2112* in NM for cover price, **$10**, an *Ape City* #2 in NM, also for cover at $2.50, a *Thanos Quest* #1 in NM for $9, a NM set of *Tales of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* #s 1-6 for $20, and *Quasar* #'s 1 & 3, and a *Nexus* #64, all in NM for a bargain $5.75.

Once again, that's it for now. Stay Tooned!

PHIL BARNHART
Cobalt Comics
2460 Sunstone Drive
Fort Collins, CO 80525
(303) 223-4016

This has been an extremely busy month for Cobalt Comics; therefore, this market report will be a short one. I have been spending the majority of my time and efforts selectively buying Golden Age and 50's horror books… when we can find them!

In my last report I asked CBM readers to help start a data base on some Holyoke titles. This was to determine the number of individual books (and their respective condition) from titles like *Suspense Comics*, *Terrific Comics*, and *Power Comics*. All information provided is held in the strictest confidence. Once the data is compiled, it will be published in CBM for the edification of all collectors. Thanks to all who have already called. Judging by the low number of responses thus far, I'm conjecturing these titles are harder to find than I first suspected, especially issues of *Terrific Comics*.

I spoke with a gentleman that owns a copy of *Suspense Comics* #3 (The Holy Grail of Schomburg covers) and he informed me that no Mile High copy of this book exists. How many copies of *Suspense Comics* #3 do exist? So far, I have conformation on three existing copies, conformation on one copy with the incorrect interior, and four more rumored-to-exist copies. I will keep you informed as further data is made available.

Recent Acquisitions: *Blazing Comics* #5 & #6, *Blue Bolt Weird Tales* #114, #116, #117, *Circus The Comic Riot* #1 VF (80/OW/88), *Power Comics* #4, *Rex Dexter of Mars* #1, *Shocking Mystery* #52, *Spotlight* #2, *Startling Terror Tales* #10, and *Thrilling Crime Cases* #44.

In closing, thanks to those of you who responded to my request for G. I. Joe's from the 60's & 70's. That's it for this month, Happy hunting.

BRUCE ELLSWORTH
SPARKS
Bruce's Comics
2432 Cerrillos Rd
Santa Fe, NM 87501
(505) 474-0494

Hello again from New Mexico. We recently did a national ad of mostly high grade DC's and Marvel's and here are the results:

DC's - Most requested books: DC Sci-Fi and horror from the late 50's and early 60's which blow out very quickly in low or high grade. Recent sales: *House of Secrets* #5 VF+ $50; *Strange Adventures* #1 VF $850, #9 VF $650; run of *Strange Adventures* #50-60 average grade GD/VG $200.

DC war books: *Our Army at War* led the pack followed by *Star Spangled War Stories*. *GI Combat* also sold well. Recent Sales: *Army at War* #94 VF $20, #101 VF- $30, #144 FN+ $17, #144 FN+ $20, #151 VF- $100, #153 VF- $50; *GI Combat* #46 VF- $50, #47 VF $50, #76 FN+ $20; *Star Spangled War Stories* #113-133 NM all 1.5 x Guide. Dinosaur issues are definitely hot!

Marvel - I get 2 calls a day for high grade Spidey's especially #1 and #14. Recent sales: *Fantasy* #15 VF- $5800; *Amazing Spider-Man* #14 VG $350, #100 NM $125; *Captain Marvel* #1 NM, #2 NM $150 for the pair; Sales between me and John Chruscinski of Tropic Comics (dealer to dealer); *Silver Surfer* #1 MT $320; *Sgt. Fury* #15 VF/NM $110.

Golden Age - Strong Golden Age market especially *Flash Comics*. I had no less than 40 calls for *Flash Comics* #49. The same can be said for *Superman* #17 with the Hitler/Hirohito cover no less than 20 calls. I wish I had that many copies of each one I could buy a new car! Recent sales: *Flash Comics* #49 FN- $150; *More Fun* #84 FN+ $290; *Star Spangled Comics* #73 VF, #82 NM, #84 NM, #86 NM all for $1200; *Superman* #17 GD $125; and *Wonder Woman* #24 GD+ $50.

Well that's all for now. Remember to spend money on what you read, not what you think you should invest in. Please read 'em!

PERRY MARGOLIN
Compleat Comics Co.
1728 Kaahumanu Ave
Wailuku, HI 96793
(808) 242-5875

Aloha from the island of Maui! With the dropping of the leaves each Fall usually comes a drop in demand for comics, and this year is no exception. After the hoopla surrounding Batman and Superman, there would not appear to be any breakaway sellers on the horizon. This is a good opportunity for collectors to take a deep breath, recoup, and catch up on all the product you may have passed over during the Summer.

Gold/Silver Age - Again, little to no demand locally for these items. We did pick up a number of *Amazing Spideys* from #20-38 in excellent condition, but that's been all recently.

Current: With the imminent dropping of most of the UK titles, Marvel would appear to be in a stronger market position heading into '94. *Daredevil* sales are showing some growth, the other mid-level Marvel's seem to have flat sales. Jae Lee on Spider-Man should up the interest in that title, but I don't expect any spill-over to the other titles. With so much product shipping late, and with unknown and constantly shifting teams on many books, I hope Marvel re-examines its mission in the market.

DC sales creep upwards, but oh so slowly. We do expect the new Superboy series to do well; people seem to really like this character, and his now being based in Hawaii will give the book added local impetus. With Green Lantern Hal Jordan scheduled to get the DC treatment next year, keep an eye on his books from #48 on. Vertigo shows steady sales, but no marked growth here, perhaps we've reached saturation point on the number of titles under that imprint.

Image is as Image does - with most books arriving 60-90 days late, the diehard fans seek them out, but the general public has about given up here.

Among the other independents, Dark Horse's *Sin City* looks promising, as do all the Simpsonverse titles from Bongo. *Elfquest* remains a consistent sales success, and *Archie* sales have also increased.

Is anyone listening? 35% of the clientele of our shop is female, and the one request we get again and again from them is for a romance-type comic, preferably in digest size that can easily fit in a purse, in order to read while waiting at the doctor's office, laundromat, etc.

Final Thought - Reading between the lines of many market reports gives one the impression that many stores are struggling right now. The only way a customer can rely on having a friendly neighborhood comic shop is to shop there! Let the retailers know what you are looking for, and don't hesitate to ask for suggestions. Any reputable retailer will happily advance order merchandise for you; with the amount of product available now (over 2100 items on Capital's December list, for example) no one shop can stock it all, but rest assured that they can get it in via special order for you. We hope you all have a merry and safe holiday season, and buy what you enjoy and enjoy what you buy. Feed your imagination!

BRUCE EDWARDS
Quasar Comics and Collectibles
P O Box 2227
Louisville, KY 40201-2227
(502) 897-3266

Welcome back to another market report from the Bluegrass state!

Convention Conflict - In late September, I traveled down to Florida for the 20th annual OrlandoCon. This was our 27th consecutive OrlandoCon and is a good illustration of what can happen when a market gets saturated with show after show. Prior to last year, this show had always been a winner for me. Starting last year a significant slow down became evident. This year was very slow with very light attendance. When I talked to fellow retailers I was informed that there were no less than 10 other shows within 150 miles that were going on at the same time! One of these other shows was even in the Orlando area! What ever happened to show promoters trying to schedule their shows to avoid conflict with another show? The OrlandoCon is the oldest show in the area and is traditionally scheduled the last weekend in September. It seems that the other show promoters are not helping their own business by having shows on the same weekend! Oh well, next year may be better!

Marvels - Current Marvel titles are slow with my customers. They seem to be most interested in completing their collections of older material. Also collectors are currently looking for many 1970s books such as *Amazing Adventures* and *Tomb of Dracula*, most issues of *Amazing Spider-Man*, and

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mainstream major hero books when priced fairly and graded accurately. *Amazing Spider-Man* #14 VG $230; *Star Wars* #1 FN/VF $10; *Silver Surfer* V2 #1 NM $6.

Golden Age/Fifties/Esoteric - The market for this material is very strong with a wide range of comics showing up on collectors' want lists. *Atom the Cat* #12 VG $4.45; *Classics Illustrated* #21 HRN 85 FR/GD $10, #33 HRN 71 PR $2, #110 HRN 111 FR/GD $6; *Dr. Spektor* #1 VG $2; *Famous Funnies* #163 GD/VG $3.50; *Fox and Crow* #163 GD $2.50; *MAD* #23 VG $35; *Mighty Samson* #14 VG $2; *Peter Paul's 4-in-1 Jumbo* GD/VG $35; *Secret Mysteries* #16 VG $17; *Strange Mysteries* #18 FN $13; *The Thing* #6 GD $11, *Thrilling Comics* #65 and #66 both GD plus at $15 each; *Unseen* #14 VG $10; *Web of Mystery* #24 VG $16, #27 VG $16.

Valiant/Image (all in NM): Valiant titles still do OK when priced at reasonable levels, but demand for Image books is close to nonexistent for everything but *Spawn*. *Archer and Armstrong* #1 $2.50; *Deathmate Tour Book*, autographed $10; *Rai* #1 $20, #3 $45, #4 $35, #5 $17.50, #6 $4; *Solar* #1 $14.50, #2 $10; *Unity* #0 $3.25; *X-O* #0 Gold $50, #7 $5.

Closing Comments - As soon as my next major mail bid auction closes, I'll have some interesting prices to report on everything from Silver Age Marvel and DC key and non-key issues and Valiant's to 1970's books, Golden Age, esoteric, and rare 1960's-1970's fanzines.

Thanks for reading!

HUGH O'KENNON
2204 Haviland Drive
Richmond, VA 23229-3120
(804) 270-2465

Since my last report, my business (which is exclusively Golden Age and Silver Age), has continued on an even keel or slightly upward. Golden Age books are still hard to come by, but most titles sell quite well. My luck seems to be holding as I continue to find new supplies of these books.

One change over the years, however, has been the source of books. Up until a few years ago almost all of my acquisitions have been "new source" material, that is, books out of attics, which add to the total GA & SA books in hands of collectors. Recently though, about 60-65% of books come from collectors, mostly from former customers who need to raise cash. While I will take them anyway I can get them, I always prefer getting them from a new find, since I get a feeling of accomplishment when I can add to the known body of books available for collectors.

Since my catalog was mailed, I have sold quite a few books. Some notable sales are *Pep* #27 VF+/NM $350; *All Flash* #9 VF $350; *All Flash* #26 VF $175; *Action* #57 VG+/FN; *Batman* #25 VF $700; *Batman* #17 VG/FN $335; *Batman* #7 VF $1300; *Meet Corliss Archer* #1 FN+/VF $250; *Police* #11 VG/FN $275; *MAD* #9 VG+ $45; *Superman* #5 FN/VF $995; *Lone Ranger* #5 NM $140; *Batman* #73 VG $300 and *Batman* #72 FN+ $165.

As for Silver Age comics, almost all high grade DC's sell well for me, but with Marvel, only *Amazing Spider-Man, Daredevil, Fantastic Four* sell well into the higher numbers. Most Marvel's do well in the lower numbers, especially in high grade.

There are still a large number of investors who insist on very high grade books, but I believe some of them are realizing that some books are just not available in high grade... so they are beginning to accept lower grades, even VG for some of the very-hard-to-find keys. At the other end of the grading scale, fair and good books sell extremely well if they are priced correctly. I would assume that these are being bought by collectors who just love comic books.

In summary, the Golden and Silver Age comics market is still very healthy and many collectors are coming on board every day. I even detect that some collectors of current comics are moving into Silver Age and even some into Golden Age. This all augers well for the hobby.

GREG WHITE
Comic Books & Collectibles
615 N Main St.
Kissimmee, FL 34745
(407) 870-0400

Hello from sunny Central Florida. As always our report includes retail store activity, mail order, and convention results.

New Product - The Autumn brings cooler weather and fewer new books. This year is no different. Since we don't have the glut of product that one receives during the Summer months, our overall sales are down a bit. *Superman* and *Batman* are still DC's top books - however, they do not blow off the rack anymore - sales have somewhat settled down. Most Marvel titles are steady - we see particular interest in the recent *Daredevil* storyline, the Frank Miller *Daredevil* series and Moon Knight (what a difference a good artist can make!). Many of our customers are weary of the mammoth amount of titles that Marvel is producing. The general consensus is that quality has taken a back seat to quantity. We could not agree more! Image and Valiant are steady movers, however, nothing like they were a year ago. The speculator market has cooled down appreciably and the "hard core" collectors are smart enough not to purchase these books in ridiculous quantity. This is a good omen. We may make a few less dollars now, however, we will profit from this 'common sense' train of thought in the future. Dark Horse, Ultraverse, Topps, Disney, and Innovation still have a small but faithful following.

Recent Back Issues (1970-1993) - Back issue sales in general have been soft this Autumn. Knightfall and Death/Reign of *Superman* have slowed down. Other DC's from this period are very slow. Marvel has also sold at a sluggish pace. *Spider-Man* continues to lead the pack with *X-Men* close behind. Recent sales: *Amazing Spider-Man* #129 FN $125; *Hulk* #181 VG $95; *Giant Size X-Men* #1 VF $120; *Superman* #75 bagged $20; *Batman* #497 $7.50; *Spawn* #1 $6; *Sandman* #1 $55.

Silver Age (1955-1969) - It has gotten to the point this Autumn that we have been able to purchase more quality collections than we have been able to sell. Not to worry - we are happy to have so many Silver Age books in stock - sales will pick up as we near the holiday season. Recent collections of Marvel, DC, Archie, and Dell have helped to swell our boxes. Recent sales: *Amazing Spider-Man* #50 VF/NM $240; *Lois Lane* #1 GD $195; *Daredevil* #1 VG- $275; *80 Page Giant* #1 VF/NM $195; *Batman* #200 NM $100, #171 FN $150; *Archie Christmas Stocking* #2 VG- $95

Golden Age (1935-1955) - Not much activity. We recently purchased a few early *World's Finest Comics*. Not much else has come our way. Our stock on Golden Age books is not deep at this time. Recent sale *Batman* #19 VG $350.

Artwork & Toys - This is a growing part of our business. We recently purchased a group of Disney cels and animation drawings and continue to expand our inventory in this area. A rare Max Fleisher 1930's animation drawing board recently came into our possession. Items of this sort continue to draw a larger crowd to our store. We see increased interest in *Star Wars* and *Star Trek* toys. As always, baby boomer toys from the 50's and 60's are in demand. Recent sales: Hanna-Barbera Flintstone Kids cel $50, eight pieces of original Archie artwork from the 1950's $600, Roger Rabbit cel $450, Han Solo Carbonite, loose, $45, Cinderella record set, 1949, $40, Walt Disney World 20th Anniversary Surprise Watch $175.

In a final note - We would like to say goodbye and wish our friend Jim Ivey of the Cartoon Museum the best of luck. Jim retired last month. His presence will be missed. Enjoy your free time Jim and please - lay off those cigars. We love you!

That's it for another month. Have a great Thanksgiving! See you in December.

PATRICIO ORTEGA
TIM CHASE
The Bookshelf
2456 Washington Blvd.
Ogden, UT 84404
(801) 621-4752

Silver Age Acquisitions - The Bookshelf recently acquired a small Silver Age and a large Bronze Age collection. The Silver consists of *Amazing Fantasy* #15, *Amazing Spider-Man* #1-350, and *Hulk* #1-6 and #102. The *AF* #15 and *Amazing Spider-Man* #1 are solid, good condition comics and *the Hulk* #1 is Fine Plus. The remaining *Hulk* VF to NM, *Spider-Man* #2-50 mostly FN/VF. The rest VF/NM. The Bronze Age collection was 3850 miscellaneous comics circa 1970, all NM. Silver Age sales and details to be covered next issue.

DC Comics - Of course, *Superman* #500 and #82 and its x-over titles completely sold-out; as did all Knightfall and Quest titles. *Superman* #82 and *Batman* #500 dominated the Summer sales and essentially doubled new *Spawn* sales—which for comparison purposes will equal 100. If reorders had been available, nothing else would have come close in sales. Unfortunately, excluding *Lobo, Robin III* and the Vertigo titles, all other DC Comics titles decreased in sales. Many have had to be canceled;

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#100 $40.00/$40.00	#100 $40.00/$40.00	#100 $40.00/$40.00	#100 $40.00/$40.00	#100 $45.00/$45.00
2000-#4000 $.32/$.64/$.60	2000-#4000 $.35/$.70/$.65	2000-#4000 $.35/$.70/$.65	2000-#4000 $.40/$.80/$.75	2000-#4000 $.54/$.108/$.100
4100-#6000 $.30/$.60/$.55	4100-#6000 $.33/$.66/$.60	4100-#6000 $.33/$.66/$.60	4100-#6000 $.38/$.76/$.70	4100-#6000 $.50/$.100/$.95
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but little by little DC Comics is adapting to the changed conditions and is repositioning itself.

Marvel - The higher-priced $2.95 and $3.95 number one titles like *X-Men* and *Spider-Man Unlimited*, *Venom*, *2099* and *X-Men* #500 sold at 75% of the *Batman* and *Superman* blockbuster. The "X-Titles" hologram covers sold at about 50% of *Superman* #82 and *Batman* #500. *Cable* #1 and 2 also sold at double *Spawn* levels initially, but is currently selling at 35% of *Spawn*. Following the *Cable* trend, all of Marvel's on-going titles decreased in sales and for the first time ever, on-going Marvel titles are being cancelled. Marvel UK, Epic, Frontier, and Heavy Hitters are mediocre to poor—the lone exception is *Sachs and Violens*. We feel that Marvel should reconsider its old and continuing strategy of maintaining market share by "flooding" the market; the old diehard Marvel fanboy and retailer completist has ceased to exist. It seems to us that Marvel continues to behave like the old General Motors and IBM—as conditions change—more and more of the same, but priced higher and higher.

An Opinion Or Two About Image - Image's on-going string of number one issues continues to have strong sales. *WildC.A.T.S. Trilogy* #1 and *Shadowhawk II* #1 all sold at 75% of the sold-out *Batman* #500 and *Superman* #82. Previous Image titles like *Pitt* #1, *Stormwatch* #1, *Darker Image* #1, *Maxx* #1, and *Bloodstrike* #1 matched or surpassed the sold-out Marvel and DC superhits.

Why are subsequent issue sales so bad here? Why are our customers calling Image names like Flakey and Flash-in-the-Pan? Why do our customers openly comment that Image has decided to specialize in number one issues? Eclipse did it in 1985-86 with black and whites; is it, as Yogi the Bear once said, "Déjà vu all over again."

The present Liefeld/Jim Lee/Silvestri/Larsen formula seems to be to create new superheroes, plot-out storylines for one issue, run full-page ads in ordering catalogues with names prominently displayed, become "consultant" and/or "figurehead" on subsequent issues, solicit new number ones.

Only Todd McFarlane—like the ant from the fable of old—has chosen to develop his story and characters. Consequently, *Spawn* exceeds the New *X-Men* as the best-selling on-going title. It's obvious that McFarlane is not doing Images' *Deathmate* — but then, neither are the grasshoppers. Unless the grasshoppers learn to meet their deadlines and develop their on-going series; we suggest that you buy subsequent Image #1's at your own risk.

Valiant, Ultraverse, Dark Horse - Valiant's Deathmate Prologue doubled *Spawn* sales, but the $4.95 issues sold at 50% of *Spawn*—sales were stopped when Image failed to produce. New comics sales have been consistent here the past year, with most titles selling at 20% of *Spawn*. *Magnus*, *Bloodshot*, *Solar*, *Turok*, and *X-O Manowar* are a little higher. *Archer & Armstrong*, *Harbinger*, *HardCorps* are a little lower. *X-O* #0 sold at 70% of *Spawn* and continues to sell well at cover. Complete runs of *Magnus*, *X-O Manowar*, *Harbinger*, and *Solar* were recently sold at Overstreet, but overall Valiant back-issue sales are slow on all titles.

Ultraverse - #1 titles — *Prime*, *Mantra*, *Hardcase*, *Prototype* and *Strangers* sold at 40% of *Spawn*. Sales seemed to be primarily fueled by the coupons, because subsequent issue sales fell by about 50%.

Dark Horse - "X" and "Rebel" sold at 17% of *Spawn*; the rest sold at 10%. The verdict from our customers is that one of the two new comic universes is not needed. *Aliens/Predator: Deadliest of the Species* #1, on the other hand, sold at 80% of *Spawn*. Good story and solid art should keep it selling at high levels. All recent back issue *Alien* and *Predator* titles sell well here around cover price; older issues at 60-70% of Overstreet. *Star Wars: Dark Empire* is the most requested Dark Horse back issue—number's 1 and 2 sell fast at $30.

Postscript - The Bookshelf began selling comics in 1981. Since then, three distinct Comic Booms and/or Gluts have been survived. The first, during 1982-83 was the emergence of independent comics publishers: Capitol, Pacific, Eclipse, and First. The second was the 1985-86 black and white independent Boom/Glut—kicked-off by Eastman and Laird's Mirage Studio's TMNT. Many were caught in a sea of black and white comics and red ink. We Saw; We Speculated; We Cried. Is it possible to have speculated and survived the 1992-93 Boom/Glut? For collectors, readers and retailers, buying comics has become problematic. The October ordering catalogue listed 919 separate comics titles to order; in 1981 every title the comic market offered fit on a round 50 pocket spinner rack—with space remaining to include a few back issues. Hopefully, the current explosion of the comic market heralds a second Golden Age. Go — collect and buy — and sin no more. Till next we meet...

RANDAL & MELANIE TUSHA
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Hello once again! Well, it has been a busy month for us. Among other things, we have made an almost 6,000 mile round trip from Phoenix, AZ to Philadelphia, PA. Along the trip, we stopped to visit many of the stores and mail-order companies that we have dealt with in the past. While in Denver, CO we visited the Mile High Comics warehouse and their Superstore. I had the pleasure of speaking to Chuck, the owner, for about an hour. We then proceeded on through Omaha, NE to Chicago, IL and finally to Dearborn, MI to attend the Motor City Comic-Con. Unfortunately, I was unable to set up there as a dealer, but that did not stop me from working my way through the show and finding a few incredible buys! I purchased two copies of *Uncanny X-Men* #12 (the first appearance of the Juggernaut) in FN for only $21 ea. I also got a #14 (1st appearance of the Sentinals) in VG for only $12. I bought a *Sgt. Fury* #1 in fair for just $35. Due to the scarcity of that issue, just finding a copy with a cover is difficult. In two years of searching, I have yet to find one in FN or better.

From Michigan, we proceeded to Cleveland and then finally Philly. The dealer Expo before the con started was a flop. Very few people attended, and there were not very many give-away items. Perhaps having the convention so soon after the San Diego ComicCon made dealers not feel very compelled to go. After all, most companies do not radically alter their marketing strategy in only one month.

The convention, though having a lower attendance than anticipated at 51,000, was a success even though it seemed like people were still a bit reluctant to spend money freely on comics. It was the largest event in comic history to date. I was pleased to finally meet so many people that I had only spoken to over the phone. Many dealers were also dumping items at such low rates it was almost sickening.

However, there were a few positive trends that I noticed.

New Books - Ultraverse: Very hot - especially *Prime* #2. I sold 15 copies at $6 - $8 each in the four days at the show. David Ammerman stopped by our booth and chatted with us

Malibu: Was quite successful in promoting themselves at the convention and the fans responded with vigor.

Image: Hot - especially *Spawn*. With Todd McFarlane, Erik Larsen, and a host of other Image artists present, it is not hard to see how these books just flew out. Despite wide spread dumping of new books by dealers with less financial stability, we sold all our issues well at cover or higher.

Valiant: *Archer & Armstrong* is Blazing hot! Valiant's no longer sell for as much as they used to, but it was quite easy for us to get cover or higher on any issues. Pre-Unity was scorching hot, especially *Magnus & Solar*. Who ever said Valiant was cold just does not understand how the market works. Just because you can only sell an item at 1/2 guide does not mean that it is cold. It just means that the guide price (which is an average) is too high. We sold two long boxes of Valiant's in just four days, and Valiant did not even have a booth at ComicFest '93. We sold five *X-O Manowar #4*'s at $25. I would like to thank Steve Massarsky for stopping by our booth. Good luck Steve, your comics are great.

Marvel: *Daredevil* was red-red hot! *Daredevil* #319 to #322 were not to be found. We sold every #320 we had at $6 each, #321 (glow) at $5, #321 (non-glow) at $3, #322 at $2. Wow! Frank Miller has done it again with his *Man without Fear* mini-series. Though only selling at cover price, even dealers were buying these issues from us. A previously hot item, *Venom*, was cold except for his appearances in *Amazing Spider-Man*. I sold three #300's in VF to NM grades for $55 each in just two days. A #298 (Eddie Brock cameo) sold for $30. #299 (1st Venom in costume), for $25, and #315-317 for $15 each! These issues have not been nthis hot in years. A major surprise was *Barbie* - we sold every copy!

Continuity: Sales were quite impressive. Even before Neal Adams started his signing, the issues sold very well. Once again, we sold pre-*Deathwatch* books at $3 or higher and many *Deathwatch* issues also sold well

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DC: *Superman* was our best seller for the entire convention. All of the Reign of Superman stuff was hot. Triangle numbers 16-31 sold well at $2.50 to $5 each. Knightfall sold very well. Once again we were not getting guide prices, but not a single part was priced at just cover, so how can I complain?

Misc. - We sold a surprising number of Japanese comics and adult titles. These are good items to carry, but sales of these obviously require some additional effort. It's important to be vigilant so as not to accidentally sell adult material to minors. We ID all adult issue purchases.

Silver Age and Golden Age - *Archies* are strong sellers. Out of about forty different misc. issues that we took, we sold twenty of them from $1.50 to $5 each. Strictly graded, these issues were only worth 50¢ or less. With the average cover price of a comic being $2.35, most are willing to spend $1.50 or more just to be able to read any issue of a title that they collect, regardless of grade. The 60's and 70's books with a $1 to $3 NM price are definitely undervalued. On the first day of the show we sold a *Silver Surfer* #1 in VF for $250. Later we sold a *Strange Tales* #110 in GD+ for $90. All along our trip, photo cover westerns were hot. I had heard that these only sold out west. Some one was obviously mistaken! We sold out of *Gold Key Magnus* the first day of the show. We would have sold *Dr. Solar* if we had been able to bring any with us on the trip. Unlike my store in Phoenix, I did not see too many kids buying Silver Age. Most sales were to people in the 30 to 50 year range.

Commentary - Having closely studied the problem for a number of years, and having watched the collapse of the Los Angeles comic market to the point where the only people selling books are those who do not mind losing money on each sale, I have come to the conclusion that most retailers need a few lessons in business. If you routinely dump new or old books at 50% to 70% off retail, then you only have yourself to blame when you can not make ends meet and when the market seems soft. Consumers will buy comics at what ever price they are marked at, whether that is full retail, 1/2 retail, or double retail, or 1/10 of retail. When enough retailers dump items in a given market, the whole market begins to deteriorate. Consumers are less willing to buy at retail if they know that the items are available at wholesale all around them. Unfortunately, the dealer who wanted to generate quick cash is hurt too because the retail adjusts down to the point where his dumping price is now retail and not such a great bargain after all.

If you do not believe this, just ask sports card dealers about the card market. With too many dealers and "dumpers", the market has all but been destroyed. I hope that it is not too late for the comic market. It will depend not on the consumer, but on the retailers and wholesalers to make sure that comics remain the exciting collectible and the investment that they have been in the past. Thanks for listening. I would like to also to say thank you to Mr. Robert Overstreet for allowing me to speak to you each month. I finally had the pleasure of meeting him at the ComicFest '93. Thanks again!

BRIAN & CAROL MORRIS
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Here in the Heartland, the leaves begin to change color and the temperature drops a little more each day. For most people, this means that Fall is about to arrive. For comic retailers, this means that we're entering the period between the Summer Glut and the Christmas Sales push. Who says that working in the comics field doesn't change one's perceptions?

Now that the previously-mentioned "Glut" is over, back issue sales are slightly up. With the "Knightfall", "Reign of the Supermen", and "Fatal Attractions" serials pretty much ended at this point, many buyers are trying to fill in the gaps in their collections, or sampling some of the new characters they've been exposed to as of late.

DC - *The Superman Family* books sell well. Most of our back issues sell for above-average market prices ($1.50 to $2.00 for a "Reign" issue and $5-$10 for the "Doomsday" books). The recent premiere of the fabulous Lois and Clark television series helps keep interest in The Big Blue Cheese high, just as the Michael Keaton movies pushed the Batman titles and the late, lamented Flash television series boosted interest in the comic of the same name.

Speaking of the Caped Crusader, the *Batman* titles have leveled off in sales since the end of the "Knightfall" storyline has ended (although the interest in those issues is still high, despite the presence of trade paperback reprints). Meanwhile, sales on the new *Catwoman* and *Robin* books are healthy.

The Golden Age, DC's best limited series since *Watchmen*, flies from the shelves. Well-written titles like *Flash*, *The Spectre*, and *Wonder Woman* still sell respectable numbers. However, *Trinity* failed to boost sales for *Green Lantern*, *Darkstars*, or *Legion*.

Marvel - *Spider-Man* still sells well, both on our current release racks as well as our back issue boxes. Anticipation is building for Peter Parker's unveiling before the world. Spidey's counterpart in the 2099 universe is doing well, as is the new *X-Men 2099* book.

The "Fatal Attractions" serial made those special hologram-covered issues instant sell-outs, even when higher-priced reorders forced us to raise our resale prices on the books. But after all, it just costs a little more to fly First Class. Back issue interest in *X-Force* has increased as artist Greg Capullo moves the art more away from the Rob Liefeld influence. However, the fans seem to be finally missing Peter David and Joe Quesada on *X-Factor*, as current and back issues drop slightly in sales.

While some people don't take to *Thunderstrike* because of the seemingly-conscious effort by Tom DeFalco and Ron Frenz to emulate the Lee-Kirby style of the classic *Thors*, the fans are eating this series up! The stories are well-constructed, fast-paced, and the readers appear to appreciate the effort to produce a Fun book. At least that's what our sales are telling us!

Venom still moves in back issues of the *Spider-Man* books as well as his own *Lethal Protector* mini-series. Subsequent appearances are leveling off in sales. Could this be the result of the overexposure we mentioned a couple of reports ago?

Image - *Spawn* is on the rise again in popularity. It rose when the quartet of guest writers got on board, then sales rose again when Todd McFarlane returned to the scripting helm. Issues One and Four (Direct Sales edition with coupon) have broken the $10 mark and are rising. *Savage Dragon* and *Shadowhawk* are still strong. The proliferation of material from Extreme Studios means that our customers are finally getting all the *Youngblood* related material they could want.

Malibu/Ultraverse - The sales are still holding up on the Ultraverse titles, especially *Manitra*, *Prime*, *Firearm* (is James Robinson going to be America's answer to Neil Gaiman? Stay tuned!), and *The Strangers*. Interest in Barry Windsor-Smith's *Rune* builds daily. These titles appeal to the people who are tired of the Big Three's hype, and are looking for something slightly different

Valiant - *Bloodshot*, *Turok*, and *The Second Life of Dr. Mirage* are still strong sellers for us, frequently demanding higher than Guide prices. Meanwhile, *X-O Manowar* shows more strength every day in back issue and current sales.

Others - *Evil Ernie* appeals to the crowd that likes *Spawn*, *Wolverine*, and *Lobo*, and our back issues never last long in our shop. Now that the *Comic's Greatest World* sixteen-parter from Dark Horse has concluded, we'll have to see if the fans want to see more from *Out of the Vortex*, *X*, and the others. Defiant sales on *Warriors of Plasm* are sinking fast. Maybe lightning doesn't strike twice.

In Closing - As Thanksgiving approaches, let's all give thanks for being able to combine our hobbies and our profession. Let us also appreciate that we do more than push paper for some publisher - we also provide entertainment and investment advice for our friends. Do we have the greatest jobs in the world, or what!

Until next time around, take care and be good!

DAVID T ALEXANDER
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Older comics are continuously blessed with a strong demand. It is easy to see that the mystique and allure of 10¢ issues still has a strong appeal to a wide variety of fans. If Golden Age books weren't out of the price range of most younger collectors, I think that the demand for them would be much greater. As it is, there aren't nearly enough Golden Age books to go around

New Comics - Some love 'em and some hate 'em.

Kids love 'em. They are affordable and available - very available. Publishers love 'em. Check the quarterly profits that Marvel has announced for the

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ARComics Readers' Choice will feature Aegis, with the story by Terrance Henry, art by Ralph Lumley, and cover art by Angel Medina. The cover will again be special, this time featuring three color neon glow-in-the-dark effect. We are really looking forward to seeing this cover.

The ARComics Readers' Comment Line is still open at 1-900-454-COMIC for your comments, and we have new questions this month. there is a lot more coming from ARComics, but for now, if you haven't gotten your orders in, order now! We appreciate your support. ARComics are YOUR comics.

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last few years. These big profits are the band wagon that fledgling publishers are trying to jump on. A handful have already made it and are extracting pro-rated Marvel size profits from the hobby. Others are trying to slice a big piece of an already well divided pie. While savvy government and business leaders have been complaining about the economic doldrums and downturns during the last couple of years, Marvel has been posting record profits. Have these profits been following the "trickle down" economic theory and are they shared by the distributors and retailers who make up the comic book food chain?

The existing large distributors seem to be on firm ground. It's been over 5 years since one of the big distributors has had to throw in the towel.

Larger, well financed, established retailers seem to love the new product. Who can complain about a quick guaranteed weekly profit?

Who hates 'em? The hate 'em group seems to be comprised mostly of smaller retailers. Their individual financial clout has minimal if any impact on any publisher. These retail stores make up the largest percentage of the 4000-8000 current retailers. Why do these guys hate 'em. It's no secret. The new comic market is out of control, so many comics and related items are published that it is impossible for even the large, well financed, experienced retailer to stock everything. When such a mass of inventory is dropped on the retailer on a constant basis, it is impossible to keep up with it

In my opinion publishers have never realized that when they double or triple their production, the current customers purchasing from retail stores do not double or triple their purchasing power. Retailers become buried with new product when they try to keep up with the comic book roller coaster. It's no surprise that a growing number of retailers feel overwhelmed by the new comic phenomena.

I have heard from a surprising number of retailers who have had to sell their Golden/Silver Age comic collection to pay their distributors for new comics which remain unsold for months after they arrive. Comics that show up well after their publicized arrival date only help to twist the knife in the chest of an already wounded retailer.

I still get nationwide calls from retailers who are dumping large quantities of leftovers for any price they can get. If you can sell all of last years mistakes for enough to cover next weeks comic bill, you can stay in business for one more week.

The Solution - I suggest publishers take a more aggressive role in creating new customers for their products. DC's Death of Superman publicity campaign is the prime example of good, effective publisher promotion. Publishers should find it distressing when their front line sales force (the retailers) is losing money on lots of the items they handle.

Old Comics - While the new material can be hot or cold at any given time, older material seems to always be in demand. Recent quick sellers have been: Phantom Comics - almost any of these are quick movers. This character has a truly international appeal. *King, Ace, Famous Funnies* and other newspaper reprint comics are in high demand. I am always selling out of these. Western comics have always had a loyal following. This group of collectors seem on the increase. Movie poster collectors are gravitating towards movie and TV comics, particularly the western genre.

Good Items - How about the *Archie* collector? These silent loyalists seem to be a genre subculture. All eras sell in this area. Since most stores don't carry in depth stocks of the *Archie* titles, collectors have to go to national dealers to fill in the holes.

Alex Schomburg comics are popular. Pulps, hardbacks, and even crossword puzzle books with Schomburg art are now the rage.

Big Little Books have exhibited an increasing demand during mid-1993. Rare premium type items such as the Tarzan Dixie Ice Cream give away lead the pack here.

Warren magazines continue to be strong. *Famous Monsters, Creepy, Eerie*, and *Vampirella* all are bordering on being very hot items. Since contributors to these titles include: Frazetta, Jack Davis, Wally Wood, Steve Ditko, Richard Corben and Jim Steranko, it is no surprise that these titles are having a surge in popularity

The most requested Golden Age comic here is currently *All Winners* #19. Sleepers from the 1950's include romance comics with Bill Ward art, and magazines that imitate *MAD*. These include: *Zany, Thimk, Panic, Loco, Crazy*, and *Humbug*.

Acquisitions - A stack of NM/MT *Tarzan* hardbacks (in dust jacket) 1948 editions and about 6000+ Silver Age comics. Other arrivals include: *Four Color* #6, a handful of high grade EGs, a couple dozen mid-50's issues of *Film Fun* (a classic movie/pin up mag), a few pre-code horror comics, a few Frazetta cover *Famous Funnies*, a long run of *MAD*, a near complete set of *Prince Valiant* Sunday newspaper pages, the Jan 1955 issue of *Playboy* (featuring Betty Page as the centerfold), about 300 premium rings, a couple hundred Golden Age issues including *National* #3 and #8, and various Timely, *Batman, Rex the Wonder Dog, Comic Cavalcade* #6, and lot of others time precludes listing

State of the Market - I think older material is the way to go. Great stuff that is a thrill to find and enjoy. New material has a high enjoyment factor but shouldn't be depended on for investment. Certainly not as investment material. Does anyone really believe that they are going to put their kids thru college with a copy of the Death of Superman?

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Hello again, from South Texas. We see a lot of changes happening in our hobby, so Let's talk about comics!

Golden Age (30's & 40's) - We just returned from ComicFest in Philadelphia and have to report that Golden Age books were hotter than those from any other era. From a $-results point of view, we sold Golden Age material at a 4:1 ratio over Silver Age books, even though we brought about four times as much (unit count) in Silver Age material. Some of the books we sold included *Prize Comics* #'s 7, 8, 9, 11, and 14; *Batman* #'s 19, 21, 23, 24, 27, 28, 29, 33, 35, 37, 42, 44, 49, 53, 55, 66, 67, 85; *Detective* #'s 97, 102, 119, 121, 141, 145; *Superman* #'s 35, 37, 38, 43, 45, 51, 72; *Miss America* #1; *Marvel Mystery* #'s 14, 73, 80, 82, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91; *Human Torch* #3; *All-Star* #'s 1, 25, 38, 39, 42, 47, and *Green Hornet* #'s 3 & 23.

The most requested titles at the show were *Captain America, Marvel Mystery, Captain Marvel Adventures*, pre-hero DC's, and Fox Good Girl Covers. Prices were under heavy duress, with only very high grade copies (VF/NM or better) realizing above-guide prices. Most of the above issues sold at prices of 10%-20% below guide. (In retrospect, we should have realized that haggling would be the norm and would have realized guide prices by offering all material at above guide prices and then conceding to bring them down to guide prices!)

Within our stores, Golden Age material continues to bring full-guide prices, as does the material we place via our mail-order search efforts. We remain fully convinced that Golden Age books are among the most secure of comic investments, and are becoming increasingly more difficult to purchase for resale.

While at the show we picked up a beautiful copy of *King Comics* #31 (1938), *Green Lantern* #'s 8, 14, & 22, and *Miss Fury* #7. The *Miss America* #1 that we mentioned as having sold was picked up only two hours prior to selling it.

Silver Age (50's & 60's) - Pre-hero Atlas and other pre-code/early code horror books topped the demand list at ComicFest. EC's sold moderately well, as did high grade early Marvels. We were quite surprised at the slackening demand for Silver Age DC books - we brought copies of *Adventure* #247, 267, & 300; *Action* #252; *Showcase* #'s 19, 22, 24, 25, 28, 30-32, 34-36, 43, 55; *Brave & Bold* #'s 1, 2, 28-30, 34-36; *Flash* #106-107; *Atom* #1; *Aquaman* #1; and others. And, we brought all of them back to San Antonio. Our prices were at or below guide, yet we entertained no offers on these items!

We did very little price adjusting on the pre-hero Atlas books; *Strange Tales* #8 VG $70, #11 VG/FN $45, #47 FN $30, #50 FN $30; *Tales to Astonish* #2 FN/VF $175, #10 VG/FN $60, #17 VG $35; *Journey into Mystery* #12 VG $45, #48 VF $60, #82 VF $45. The inexpensive, third-tier horror titles sold like popcorn - who wouldn't pay $5 to $10 for forty year-old books in VG?

Some of the Marvels we moved included: *Amazing Spider-Man* #7 VF $295, #8 VF $275, #17 VF/NM $300, #50 NM $200; *Avengers* #2 NM (beautiful!) $425, #5 NM $125, #57 NM $40; *Daredevil* #4 VF $80, #17 NM $60; *Fantastic Four* #28 NM $130, #52 NM $50, #55 NM $40; *Silver Surfer* #1 VG $70, #1 VF $225, #4 FN $125, #14 NM $50; *Tales to Astonish* #27 GD $155, #40 NM $165, #44 VF $100, #57 NM $80; *X-Men* #1 GD $80, #3 NM $300, #28 NM $55, #35 NM $55, #58 VF $35. High grade pieces significantly outsold mid to low grade items.

While key DC's were slow to move, we did sell a fair number of "commons." Included are:

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Superboy #86 FN $35, #89 VF $35; *Lois Lane* #10 FN $50, #71 VG $20; *Batman* #117 VG $50, #125 FN $45; *Green Lantern* #2 VF $300, #8 VG $35, #13 VG $35, #76 NM $80.

Post Silver Age - Things are literally dead from this era here, with only a few issues of certain titles exhibiting any signs of life whatsoever. In the almost live area are *X-Men* #94 and *Giant Size* #1, *Hulk* #180-181-182, and *Marvel Spotlight* #1 & 2. Previously hot books, such as *Amazing Spider-Man* #129, *Marvel Spotlight* #5, *Astonishing Tales* (Deathlok), *Kamandi*, and *Tomb of Dracula* generate no interest from collectors. Did everyone give up on these or are we seeing the calm before the storm? I guess the next few months will reveal the answer to this question

Modern Material - Changes, changes, changes! Early Valiant's can be had at rock bottom prices (we brought a small box of these, including *Harbinger* #'s 0, 1, 2; *Solar* #'s 1, 3, 10; *Magnus* #'s 0, 1, 2, 3; *Rai* #'s 1, 3, 4, and others and didn't sell a single issue - even with a big sign that said 50% off early Valiant's!). The "special" issues (Golds, Platinums, etc.) are even harder to move! One man was bringing around Gold *Archer & Armstrong* #0's at $15 and couldn't find a buyer! We offered *Maxx* glow-in-the-darks at $10, *Aliens* platinums for $12, *Eternal Warrior Gold* at $20, *WildC.A.T.S.* Gold at $20, and *Turok* Gold at $15 - we were unable to sell even one of these books!

To be fair, this is not the same situation we have at our retail outlets. ComicFest was a dumping ground for at least half of the dealers. The Superman die-cut covers could be bought for 25¢. *Batman* #497 was available in quantity at $2. And almost any post-Unity Valiant book could be had for 50¢ or less. Needless to say, I picked up a lot of store restock at great prices, including *Spawn* #1-4 at $3 each, *Bloodshot* #6 & 7 at $1.50 each, and *Daredevil* #321 glow-in-the-darks at $1.

The recent books that were bringing premium prices were those that caught this new speculator market by surprise such as: *Vampirella* #1 $35, #2 $20, #3 $12; *Man of Steel* #25 $8; *Green Lantern* #46 $8; *Fantastic Four* #381 $5; and *Daredevil* #319 $10.

Wrap-up - This is a lot shorter than my usual market report, primarily due to time constraints - one day after returning home from ComicFest to prepare the report, surveys, and pricing updates. Feel free to call if you'd like to discuss anything from this report.

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Hello again from Northern California. It's time for another report in our never-ending quest for accuracy in the comics market. Thanks to Overstreet's CBM for this, the most complete forum for comics market analysis… and thanks to the always awesome Flying Colors staff for helping to compile this information.

Golden Age - Most collectors of Golden Age books we talk with are looking for undiscovered gems among the lower priced 40's books. With Golden Age key titles being out of the reach of many collectors, this seems like a reasonable strategy. Without any high grade books from this era to sell, we have seen a steady increase in sales and requests for Golden Age comics which feature appealing art and a decent price. Recent sales include more of our Good Girl art comics like *Rangers, Jumbo*, and *Venus* in FR/GD at guide, as well as *Skyman* #1 FR/GD @ $45; *Brick Bradford* #6 FN @ $30 (another great Schomburg cover!), several early HRN *Classics Illustrated* in FR/FN at guide, and *Fight* #30 VG @ $30.

Silver Age - Maybe it's just that the recession finally hit California, or perhaps we have more bargain hunters shopping here than ever before, but Silver Age sales seem to have stalled on the higher end books, with continued stronger action on lower-priced GD/FN conditioned books. The recent trend we've been reporting on sales of Silver Age Dells, Archies, TV & Movie tie-ins is continuing. Is this something happening nationally or is it perhaps we're the only retailer in this immediate area devoting any bin space to these books?

Modern Age - What's up with the new stuff? First off, there are so many choices that buyers have to make now that it almost precludes there being any more mega-sellers along the lines of *X-Men* #1, *Spawn* #1, or *Superman* #75. The intrinsic reason for this is that comics' buyers can no longer afford to speculate with multiple copy purchases, so the astronomical sales figures of the past few years may not be broken until the comics' market evolves to another level.

Our top new comics in-store are *X-Men, Uncanny X-Men, Wolverine, Superman, Ren & Stimpy, Spawn, WildC.A.T.S. Sourcebook, Amazing Spider-Man, Deathmate* Black (finally!) and *Batman*. Let me correct what I said last issue about *Superman* fading down the list. I was wrong. The strong continuity in the Superman storyline keeps readers coming back week after week. However many collectors just don't like the "new" Batman and sales have been sinking noticeably. Also, it should be noted that best-selling titles are not necessarily the most entertaining comics, and for the most part, it is the readers of comics who will determine long-term collectibility.

As a retailer, I love predictability when it comes to ordering and selling new comics. Unfortunately, this is a very difficult market to predict because some publishers are always late shipping their comics, forcing comic book buyers to make unexpected choices when they do their weekly shopping. This sort of thing makes buyers quite fickle with their purchases. With this in mind, I'd like to applaud DC for having the most predictable shipping schedule and the most reliable reader base of any major publisher. This is what continues to make the Vertigo line a roaring success, but most of DC's other titles also have steady, faithful audiences. Titles to watch include *Legionnaires, Justice League Task Force,* and *Catwoman*.

Marvel continues to sell more comics than any other publisher, but they have a tremendous number of titles to accomplish that feat. *Avengers* #368 was just released and is selling very well thanks to a good story and a meaningful X-Men cross-over. *Fantastic Four* #381 sold out quickly without satisfying all the demand… but if anyone believes this is the final demise of Reed Richards, please realize that issue #400 is only a year and a half away

When *X-Men* #1 came out in 1991, there were a ton of people saying there was no way 7 million comics of the same story could be absorbed into the market. But no one could have predicted the sharp rise in the number of comic book buyers between 1991 and 1993, just as no one could have predicted the impact of the X-Men animated series on comic buying habits. While there are still dealers out there sitting on cases of unopened *X-Men* #1, the demand for the whole *X-Men* series is constantly amazing, with #1a-d going quickly for $3.50, #1e @ $6.50 and #2-9 moving very well @ $6.50 each. We have a particularly difficult time keeping #5-7 in stock. When it comes to back issues, the mutants still rule the roost

Malibu's Ultraverse is shaping up to be a very reader-friendly comics' universe, with strong showings recently from *Firearm* and *Sludge*. Watch the interest grow on *Strangers* as readers realize how many of the Ultraverse characters were near that fateful cable car.

Market Notes - With the exception of a few titles, we have seen a real softening of the recent back issue market. Valiant's are no longer flying out of the bins and *Spawn* is Image's only consistent back issue seller. It is true that 80% of our back issue sales come from only about 20% of the titles we carry.

At the risk of opening a can of worms, I don't believe there are any "hot" comics anymore. We always say that comics don't have to be hot to be cool, and this has never been more true. With an ever-increasing number of new comics arriving in the store as many as four days a week, there is no time for comics to maintain heat As a matter of fact, Flying Colors has removed the word "hot" from our in-store vocabulary.

Not to be repetitive, but we strongly suggest 1) Put yourself on a weekly comics budget; 2) Buy only what you intend to read, then if the market pushes that book up in value, you've got a nice bonus to your entertainment dollar… and 3) Communicate with your comic book retailer and with the editors of your favorite titles because we all need to know what you like and don't like.

Thanks for listening and keep those four colors flying!

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The most immediate thought I have as I write this consists of two areas. 1) Marvel is struggling to hold on to, not to regain, market share, and 2) what

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to write about for the past 30 days. Let me deal with these two issues in the report, since both of these issues reflect the current state of the market.

Current Stuff - *Superman* and *Batman* remain the most asked for, most looked forward to, and the key sellers in back issues. However, DC is subject to the general malaise which infects all new issues at this period, and nothing else in the line seems outstanding. Elseworlds books sell well, with *Speeding Bullets* a good sell, and a good read, but the *Batman-Houdini* bringing returns (yes, for the more expensive books, if a subscriber really has a problem with a book, they can return it for credit), and jeers. A shame, since this was a potentially super combo.

Sandman remains a good sell, with requests for *Jonah Hex* (not reflected in back issue demand yet). Other than these the line sells competently, not more. *Comics Greatest World, Ultraverse* (with the exception of *Strangers*), Valiant and Image suffer from sleeping sickness; perhaps some of these titles will go into a coma shortly? Defiant isn't mentioned because they seem more interested in selling paraphernalia (cards, binders, t-shirts), rather than books. People don't purchase licensing material, without a solid foundation of books and characters.

I leave Marvel for the last here since it's clear they are in the most trouble, and rather than trying to extricate themselves, they seem to be alienating the consumer more and more. Price increases, nonsense covers, poor reads, over-use of characters, all seem to be combining to cause my subscribers and walk-in trade to reject them.

The latest example of this arrived yesterday, the *Wolverine Conservation* special. Here's a book with 15 (that's fifteen) pages of story (and some pretty photo's), an embossed cover, which should have a cover price of $1.25, in order to make some money for Wildlife Conservation, but features a cover price of $2.95. Not only will that turn off potential customers, but it starts the aware consumer thinking? What am I buying this stuff for, and off the Marvel titles go from their folders. Also if you look inside the book, there is a note that says Wildlife Conservation's gets 10% of the cover price. Why not all of the profit, if this is supposed to be a fund raiser? Bad PR, and poor psychological impact, at a time when dealers are ordering less and less Marvel, and customers are defecting massively. N.B. *Wolverine* #75 is awaited.

Current Stuff - *Daredevil*. Fall from Grace remains the key hit (Marvel could learn from this, a $1.25 book with a good story sells). Last prices, #319 $25, #320 (where did these go?) $10, #321 $6, #322 $5 (direct edition). The push I thought might develop for older issues hasn't developed, but the steady stream of requests for current issues still convinces me it's a matter time. *Green Lantern* #46 commands $20 when I have them, but I don't. Is this a genuinely scarce book? Could be, and it's needed for the Superman storyline. Other than these there is no demand trend for any book of the past 3-4 months.

Back Issue Stuff - The only consistent back issue demand is *Superman*. Period. This means everything from *Action* to *Superman* titles from the late 80's early 90's, at $1, $2, $3 a book, (in large quantities), to the mid-60's-on material. Not expensive material in many cases, but many readers want to fill in, and this material is difficult to come by. Condition doesn't seem to be a problem, since these are collectors, and they want to read the stories: *Superman Annual* #6 VG $12, *Superman Annual* #7 VG/FN $20. Some interest in Kirby Marvel material is surfacing, with requests for *Capt America*, etc. at guide.

Acquisitions - I seldom write anything here, but I purchased a wonderfully beat-up small collection of Disney material, *Mickey Mouse, WDC&S, Uncle Scrooge*, etc. from the 60's and 50's, ranging from coverless to a high grade of FR/GD. I took them home, and spent three days simply loving them all over again.

Comments - Two issues here. (1) In response to several of the calls and letters I've received regarding my market reports, please remember that when dealing with "hot" books, there is a lead time of at least 30 days from the time any report is written, until it appears in print. The result is that what was hot 30 days ago may (may?) not be so when you read this. When dealing with these bouncing balls, prices can change weekly (daily?). When *Death of Superman*, black bagged, was hot… prices zig-zagged from $3, to $35, to $20, to $50, to $12, almost daily. As a book heats up, it's not unusual for copies to suddenly appear and this then lowers the price. So, please keep in mind that what you read here was written 30 or more days ago. Please note, also, this may tell you something about how to purchase supposedly "hot" books.

(2) The issues of why the "hot" books are sold out at your dealer. I find it a consistent phenomenon from talking to my walk-in customers, that a day after a "hot" book appears every dealer in Manhattan is "sold-out". I can only speak for myself, but I know why it happens with me. I take them off-sale immediately… why?? So that I can retire and go live in London, and go to National Theatre every night, and sit in the first row?!?

Forget it. Here's what happens. With even the most popular books (Supes, BM, ASM Xes), perhaps only 40%-50% of my subscribers request the title. For a lower line book, let's take the *Green Lantern* as an example., perhaps 10%-15% request it. But, many of my subscribers will want the "hot" book of a title they don't normally collect. Subscribers are the bread and butter for any dealer, I need them, they need me, and if I can't supply them with the hot books they don't normally get, well… why are they with me?

So, I remove the "hot" title, and hold them for about 2 weeks, to make sure that, as my subscribers pick up their reserves, if they want the hot item, I have it for them, at their usual discount tier. That means that all of my subscribers who wanted it, got the *GL* #46 at between $1 and $1.25. I think that at the end of the 2 weeks, I had three copies left over. The profit on that doesn't get me to the airport, let alone on the plane. I even tell walk-in customers the situation, and encourage them to subscribe to their local store to avoid disappointment.

What is the moral of all of this? If you don't have a regular store, find one. Be loyal to your dealer, and he/she will be loyal to you. If he/she isn't, find one who will be.

Endnotes - Much of the new TV stuff reminds me of Marvel Comics. Glitzy covers, no content. Seaquest seems to have the most potential, but they need stories. Lois and Clark I can't quite figure out. The most recent episode, with the "invisible man" had about 10 minutes of story. And I personally, am thrown by Perry White (an excellent Lane Smith), yelling "Great shades of Elvis". If we can't get acting, at least let's have a story. For now, the current crop of shows seem to emulate hologram covers, with no content more interestingly, none of the shows seem to be generating any additional interest in bringing customers into the store.

Last year people would ask if there was a *Ren & Stimpy* comic; no one comes in and asks if there is a Seaquest comic. If you get Nickelodeon, try "Are You Afraid of the Dark". It uses 23 minutes to tell 23 minutes worth of story, and it's fun. And try the DC Elseworlds; they have a good batting average. Enjoy.

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Hello, and welcome to my first market report. I'd like to thank Michael Naiman for giving me the opportunity to report on the world of comics from my end of the industry. Motor City Comics, as some of you may know, does not run a store, we travel the convention circuit and attend over fifty conventions a year. So my report is not a localized geographic report, but a broader report of comics from around the country. I feel that this gives me a well rounded outlook on what's happening in the comic book market, whether it's Golden Age, Silver Age, Bronze Age or New Age.

New Comics - The most often bought new books are the Vertigo titles from DC. *Sandman* leading the pack followed closely by *Hellblazer* and *Death: The High Cost of Living*. The remaining titles are quick to sell when we have them in stock. The new *Jonah Hex* series seems to be the newest hit from the world of DC, though just a five issue series, it has the potential to rise to the top of recent back issue sales. The popularity of these characters have proven a steady money maker for stores and dealers alike. Sales on Valiant titles has slowed tremendously in the past several months. This is impart to the lack of the investors buying multiple copies of each title, wholesale dumping is a mainstay at most larger conventions, too many card dealers flooding the market and getting burned.

Valiant is back to the basic collecting audience that it once had. Their books are being read, not piled on hoping for a turnover in two months. Image has also dropped in sales, the only consistent sellers are *Spawn* and *Savage Dragon*. I can't tell you when I have sold other titles from this company. The only time I do is when the creator of the book is present to sign the book. Marvel sales has neither dropped nor increased. *Spider-Man, X-Men,*

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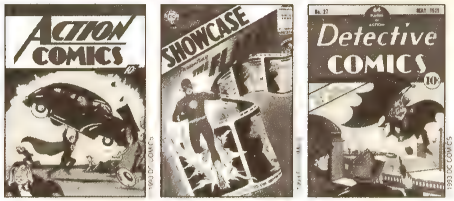

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Uncanny X-Men and *Ren & Stimpy* still dominate the sales of Marvel books. *Amazing* #300 is by-far the best seller of all Marvels. They do have one dead title for back issues, *Punisher* This title is dead in the water. *Amazing* #300 sells for $70, *Sandman* #1 at $45 and #8 at $25, with all later numbers getting guide and #'s 30 up getting $5 each.

Bronze Comics - There is not much to report in this area of collecting. Titles such as *The Defenders, Son of Satan, Tomb of Dracula, Werewolf by Night* and *Jonah Hex* are still good sellers. The latter title taking the biggest movement in sales. With *All-Star Western* #10 getting almost double guide for the first appearance of this character. *All-Star Western* NM sold for $70.

Silver Comics - Still the best end of business. Any high grade DC is not long in the boxes nor on the shelves, high grade Marvel is also quick to go, as is any high grade Silver Age book. Spidey does dominate the sales in Silver Age but DC war titles, and pre-hero Marvels are coming in at a close second. Low grade books seem to do nicely as well, when priced at, or below guide. Mid range conditions seem to sit and are often ignored. The collector wants the high grade for his/her collection and the diehard fan wants the best price for his read. The pre-hero Marvels are the only exceptions to the rule, they sell in any grade. They are also getting to be the hardest to find in any condition. A significant sale in Silver Age that deserves mention is the sale of *Fantastic Four* #48 in NM to MT condition for $950.

Golden Age - These, the rarest of books in high grade, are consistent sellers. Timely's move at an astounding rate, in practically any condition *Batman* and *Wonder Woman* seem to be the strongest DC movers, with *Batman* 's leading the way. *Superman* has also seen a steady sales figure with his recent historical "death". Early Classics and Four Colors are also good in the sales department.

The sales of Golden Age to the collector is steadily the most enjoyable end of the business. To see a person's eyes light up when they purchase that elusive missing book from their collection or when they are able to upgrade an issue to a better condition. This makes the sale that much more enjoyable to me, the salesman.

Another note regarding the collecting of Golden Age books, is the increase in knowledge of these books from the so called "kiddie patrol" They have begun to show an interest in comics as a collective hobby not as an overnight investment. They may also be realizing that there was some darn good material being produced in the forties with story and art that had meaning and feelings aside from the almighty dollar.

As A Final Note: I'd like to express my concern for the comic book market. As I noted there is consistent dumping at conventions and even in some stores as well as the computer networks. This market has always been a business, but it was once fun to collect.

Now every kid buys his books for the quick profit. The profit that no longer is there, due to a new gimmick or a push and pick of the month by one of the many fanzines on the market. I have had many young collectors ask about a title and when told to check a certain box, they stand and look at the title dividers and ask "Where, I don't see it?". Comics helped me learn to read and I've read every one of my books and still do. My question is this: Do the youth of today read the books they buy, or are they being short changed by the overnight get rich dealers of the nineties? I hope they read them, but I believe it's the latter of the two.

Thank you for your time and patience. Till next month.

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Boy, after stating last report that things don't change much in the course of one month, we really have to eat our words. Even though September & October are the slowest months of the year for comic book sales, we have had a big month! Sales of newer books were as slow as we predicted, but Golden Age and Silver Age books were flying! As we have stated in the past, high grade key books are in very high demand, and we had some beauties. Unfortunately we didn't keep a list of the conditions of each individual book that sold, but it's safe to say most were in VF or better condition and several of them went for over guide prices.

Golden Age - The Marvel/Timely books were the big movers for us. The demand for *Captain America, Marvel Mystery, Human Torch* etc. is tremendous, and the stuff sells as soon as we get them. Our biggest sale this month was the gorgeous Larson copy of the first issue of *The Human Torch* for $12,000! That's more than 1.5 times the NM Guide price of $7800. But if you have ever seen a comic from any of the "Pedigree" collections you'll know why these books bring such high prices. Other nice Timely's that we sold are *Marvel Mystery* #12 $877, #35 (Pennsylvania copy) $1500, #90 $450. After being in a slump with us for some time, Golden Age Disney comics have started moving again. Other Golden Age that continues to be in demand are Fawcett *Captain Marvels*, EC's, and photo cover westerns. DC stuff has been slower than it has been in some time, but interest is still pretty good. We also sold a beautiful *Doctor Solar* #1 for $275.

Silver Age - Marvel: Lots of action here in the key stuff. Some sales include *X-Men* #1 $3000, #1 FN+ $1000; *Avengers* #4 $400; *Hulk* #1 $2200, #5 $875, #6 $775; *Daredevil* #1 $950, #1 FN+ $650; *Iron Man* #1 $288; *Tales of Suspense* #58 $200; *Strange Tales* #101 FN+ $275; *Fantastic four* #48 $450; *Journey into Mystery* #86 (Double Cover) $180; *Marvel Tales* #1 FN+ $150; *Tales of Suspense* #49 VF- $2400; *Journey into Mystery* #83 $2500.

DC: A very strong market here for high quality books. As we stated earlier most of these comics and the above Marvels were very high grade unless noted. Sales: *Brave & Bold* #28 FN+ $1500; *Aquaman* #1 $325; *Batman* #155 (First Silver Age Penguin) $275, #171 (First Silver Age Riddler) $275; *Brave & Bold* #54 $225, *Hawkman* #1 $300; *Green Lantern* #1 $1275; *Flash* #123 $450, #129 $150; *Teen Titans* #1 $200; *Metal Men* #1 $300; *Justice League* #9 $250. Other DC's in high demand are the *Green Lantern/Green Arrow* books by Neal Adams as well as his *Batman* issues and the Deadman stories he did in *Strange Adventures*

As for other companies, *Archies, Richie Rich, Gold Key Hannah Barbera* stuff and later *Classics Illustrated* issues are selling well as long as they are under $10. The war and western stuff has slacked off a bit in sales with the exception of early *Jonah Hex* appearances which are in very high demand. These are pretty tough to find in high grade, and prices are going way up.

Newer Comics - This area of the business has been slow as expected for this time of year. For DC, the *Superman* and *Batman* titles are still their best sellers with not much drop off of sales from the Summer, when the Reign of the Supermen and Knightfall series were booming. The rest of their titles are selling about average for the season that we are in, though the Milestone titles like *Icon* and *Blood Syndicate* are pretty slow.

Marvel: *Daredevil* is hot! The changes they've made with the character and the cool covers have really been a big hit with collectors. #319 & #320 are very tough to find since most dealers underordered on these books and so they had a very small print run. Currently, #319 is selling at $10 and #320 at $5. Also hot is *Fantastic Four* #381 with the "Death" of Reed Richards and Doctor Doom. While at the moment it is not going for much over cover price, it was a sell-out and is in very high demand, so prices should be rising soon. The *Fatal Attraction* issues of the X-tiles with the hologram covers are also big movers. As for slow selling titles, all the Marvel UK titles top the list of the bad movers. Also slow are the Razorline books by Clive Barker and the Frontier titles like *Children of the Voyager*. Most of the other Marvel mainstream books are holding their own, but nothing special sales wise. *Sabretooth* and *Deadpool* are doing well as should the new *Gambit* series judging by the requests we have had for it.

Independents - Not much doing here. The Image Comics are doing okay, but are still selling at about half of what they were doing last year. *Spawn* and *Deathmate* are their best selling titles. Early issues of *Spawn, Shadowhawk*, and *Youngblood* sell well, but the other Image back issues are slow. Valiants are very slow both as new issues and back issues. The early numbers still sell all right if they are priced cheap. Dark Horse's *Comics Greatest World* and Malibu's Ultraverse titles are about the only other independents that are selling at any significant numbers.

That should do it for now. Hope you had a happy Halloween! Here at Tropic, we all dressed as Razorback from *Spectacular Spider-Man* #13 (check it out). Now that's scary! See you next time!

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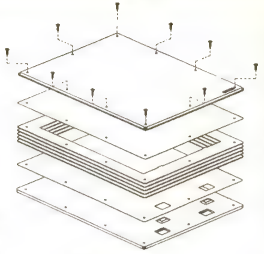

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Hi, we're back once again from the Old Dominion.

Mr. Green Lantern - September will always be remembered as the month that we had our first artist come to our stores and conduct signings for our customers. We brought in the creator of the Golden Age *Green Lantern*, Mr. Mart Nodell. Mr. Nodell, his wife and son, were our guests for four days, and our customers and his fans were enthused by his appearance. Mr. Nodell and his family are classy people and represent all the best in our industry. At 77 years "young", Mart must have been powered by Energizer batteries because he never seemed to run down or get tired - he just kept on going and going and going and...

George and I would like to express our thanks to Mr. Nodell and his family for coming to our stores. We feel very lucky to hear about how it used to be at the beginning by someone who was there and part of it. It was an education for us all—Thanks!

The Glut of the Summer - The Summer of '93 will be remembered as the Summer of the biggest glut of books in the history of comics. It seemed as if all the publishers- major and independents- kept producing title after title, card after card, gimmick after gimmick. There was no let up.

This over production began to take its' toll as many retailers were caught in the old "rich in product but poor in cash" situation and were forced to close their doors. In this area we have lost four stores. Some that had been in business for years. It was quite a shock when they closed their doors.

Unless retailers get some sort of relief from the publishers and/or the distributors, the "goose that laid the golden egg" may become extinct and so will the comic world as we know it today.

New Stuff - DC: *Superman, Batman* once again lead the pack. These books keep selling out and back issues are beginning to move out of our boxes. *Catwoman* is still hot, and we are still purchasing additional copies after we run out of our initial order.

Knightquest sales have picked up, but some of our customers are complaining that DC is putting the Knightquest logo on almost all Batman books . . . even if there is little, if any, connection to the main storyline.

Vertigo books are slow once again and we have a good selection of back issues on the shelf. *Robin* #1 was a sell through, with requests for additional copies.

Marvel: *X-Men* and *Wolverine* are as hot as you can get (not counting *Superman* #75). *Wolverine* #75 just about flew off the shelves and the demand is still high. Interest in the *Punisher* is starting to pick up with the new storyline beginning, which seems to be leading to the end of Frank Castle as the Punisher. All 2099 titles (with exception of *X-Men 2099*) are extremely weak, although *Spider-Man 2099* sales are slowly improving. *Daredevil* issues by Frank Miller and John Romita Jr. are in high demand. "Fantastic Four no more" storyline has rekindled interest in this title and it may be on its way back to becoming "the greatest". Marvel UK is just about dead-orders for these titles are just about zero for us and for some of the other retailers in the area.

Valiant. New issue orders and sales have slipped these past few weeks. Back issue sales have slowed almost to a stand still. However, Valiant has some marketing plans that should improve sales in October. Valiant Vision requests and interest seems to be growing each day and could be another hit for them.

Image: New issue sales are down across the board, but if the statements coming from the company are true (that they will begin shipping on time and be following a regular schedule) look for them to recapture the market share that they lost. Oh yes, we have heard this promise from them before, so I wouldn't bet the house on their promise.

Continuity Comics: Okay, we admit that we got caught up with all the hype from Neal Adams and increased our orders, so we should have enough copies to last until the turn of the century. Anyone out there need some?

Dark Horse: *Aliens, Predator* titles selling fine, but *Comics Greatest World* was a super big disappointment for us as the demand never met our expectation.

Defiant: *Warriors of Plasm* sales are slow, but interest in the new series "Good Guys" seems to be increasing every week.

Harris Comics: Who? You know: the guys who publish *Vampirella*. Sales and interest seems to be improving for them.

Innovation: *Dark Shadows, Executioner, Lost in Space* and the Anne Rice books are selling at a steady pace. Our numbers are consistent month to month, which makes it nice for us retailers.

This brings us to a close for this month's report. Next month I'll fill you in on how our big anniversary sale went.

WILLIAM H. FEIST
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Hey, Hey! It's Book Trader Bill, it's October which means YMCA Rodeo and HostFest in Minot and Halloween around the country. It also means a little bit better comic sales.

Golden/Silver Age - Nothing to report in this area this month.

Bronze Age - Sales of Bronze Age comics here are virtually nil. Nada. Totally, completely unregisterable on any scale known to man.

Current Age - Overall: The customer trend towards down-sizing what they collect continues. I recently analyzed my pull-and-hold numbers for key Marvel, DC, and Image titles. I compared the number of sign-ups in October, 1993, with the number of sign-ups in October, 1992. Marvel and Image both lost an average of about one-third. DC titles, other than *Batman* and *Superman* titles, saw even deeper drops that averaged about 50% overall. However *Batman* and *Superman* titles gained an average of 45% and 50% respectively, far outweighing any decreases.

Keep in mind several caveats with these figures. First of all, they were not derived by scientific methods and I would not even want to guess what the margin of error is. Second, these figures represent percentages of sign-ups. I suspect that figures based on actual dollar amounts or numbers of people signed up would be different, although I am sure they would show the same kinds of trends. Also, some of the downward trends may be due to the opening of two new competitors that discount all sales of their new comics (I do not).

Much of the decrease, however, has been people who have simply gotten out of comic collecting. Some of this has been speculators who are no longer speculating on comics. This is particularly true of the *Superman* titles which lost an average of nearly 70% from the height of the *Superman: Doomsday* story. Yet, despite that, they gained an average of 50% over the pre-Doomsday numbers demonstrating the long-term impact this storyline had in this area.

Judging by customer comments, the one-third decrease in Marvel appears to be due to people voting with their dollars against gimmick covers (and the high prices that go with them), the tougher competition from other superhero universes (Image, Malibu, Valiant and so on), and a general dissatisfaction with the overall quality of story and art.

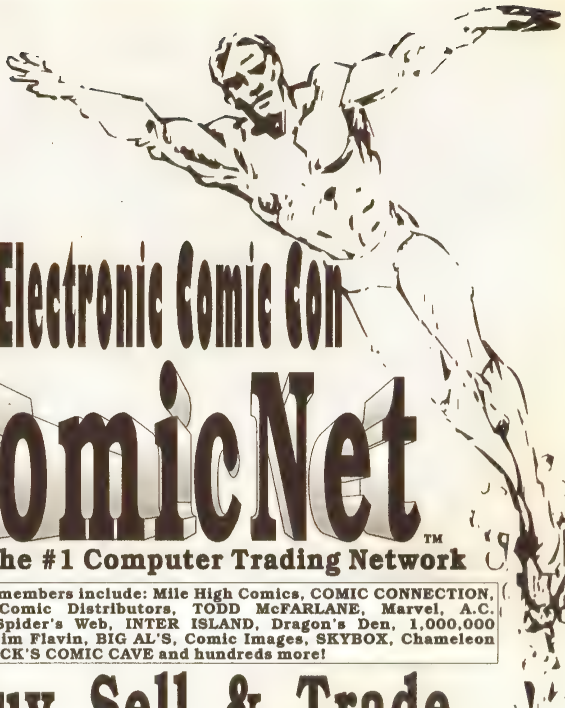
Again, judging by customer comments, the one-third decrease in Image is due primarily to the untimely manner in which Image releases its titles. There is also some dissatisfaction with art and story. However, the primary factor is simply that our customers seem to distrust the companies ability to be on time.

DC: Well, as I indicated earlier, the *Superman* titles continue to sell well. Much better, in fact, than I anticipated. I may even have to increase my orders for this title. Needless to say, with the figures I reported above, this is not something I have had to do much of lately.

The *Batman: Knightquest* title has also been holding its' own quite well. Introducing the *Catwoman* and *Robin* on-going series during this time-frame was an excellent marketing move on DC's part.

I continue to hear a great deal of remorse about Neil Gaiman's decision to end *Sandman* in the not-too-distant future. My concern is that this move may also have a negative affect on the other Vertigo titles for which *Sandman* is obviously the flagship title. It could be like permanently ending *Superman* or *Batman* for the regular DC superhero universe!

Dark Horse: I want to take this opportunity to congratulate Dark Horse Comics on their *Comics Greatest World* line. Sixteen great sixteen page stories for a buck each, and everyone of them released on time. Considering the track record of some other



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companies, Dark Horse Comics should get something more than just a pat on the back for this feat! It will be interesting to see if they can keep up the momentum with *Vortex*, the on-going series.

Image: See my comments above regarding shipping schedules. It appears they have lost a great deal of retailer support too, if my discussions with other retailers is any indication. Many of us are increasingly angry about Image's unwillingness to take responsibility for the tremendous negative financial impact their shipping record has had on retailers. When the retailer loses a third or more of their expected sales (between the time the book was supposed to arrive and when it actually arrives three to five months later), the retailer loses money! The publisher doesn't lose money and neither does the distributor (unless they ordered additional copies in anticipation of reorders that never materialized). But, ultimately, it is the retailer that loses big and can least afford it. What's worse, it's not the retailer's fault!

Malibu: Malibu's new Ultraverse continues to do very well. It is unfortunate that their Protector's Universe is not doing as well.

Marvel: Like Image, Marvel has lost about one-third of their customer support here. However, as indicated above, I think the reasons are different. However, as I have already addressed this subject, I won't say it all over again. "Nuff said."

Valiant: The *Deathmate* series from Valiant/Image did very well. Image is even allegedly about to release their first *Deathmate* series next week. Such a deal!

Warp Graphics - This is a company that I have not mentioned before that deserves mentioning. The *Elfquest* titles are moderate selling titles, but they seem to target and entirely different group of people. I find that the *Elfquest* titles target the ladies more than the mainstream superhero audience. Also worth mentioning in this vein, as pointed out last month by Lee Hester and Cindy Okumoto of Lee's Comics, is Archie Comics which also attracts a small, but primarily female audience. This is great. We need more titles and publishers like these two.

Cards - Skybox: The Marvel Series IV cards continue to do poorly here. However, the Marvel Masterpiece II cards have just been released. Although, it is too early to say for sure how popular these will be, I have heard rumors that they have already sold out in some places in the area. Also, we tried some Jim Lee Skycaps. Bark, bark, Bow Wow! Oh well.

Hey, hey! It's Book Trader Bill and I'll see ya next month.

JOHN TINKESS
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As this month's deadline approached, I decided to go back and reread the last few months worth of market reports. In those pages nearly everyone (myself included) spent a great deal of space bemoaning the current state of the market. I'm sure that by now the readers have heard enough of gluts speculators and so on, so I'll do my best to steer clear of those subjects in this report.

This is one of the most exciting periods for the comics industry in years. Not since 1986-87 (with *Watchmen*, *Dark Knight*, *Man of Steel*, and *Elektra Assassin*) have I seen such an overwhelming selection of quality material available. Most customers frequently lament the fact that they cannot afford to buy everything that they want.

Marvel - After a fairly weak first half of the year, Marvel has rebounded with some strong hits. Fans didn't need radar senses to find *Daredevil: Man without Fear*. The first two issues flew off the shelf once readers discovered that Frank Miller still hadn't lost his magic touch with *Daredevil*. The "Fall from Grace" storyline in the monthly *Daredevil* title has improved sales on that book dramatically as well.

Disproving the theory that Heavy Hitters don't sell, *Sachs & Violens* has become a tremendous hit here. Initial orders sold out the first day and a substantial re-order is almost gone. As with *Hulk: Future Imperfect*, Peter David and George Perez have once again shown that quality sells regardless of price of format.

Fantastic Four sales have been rising lately, especially #381 (the death? of Reed Richards and Doctor Doom). Although many readers have expressed their dissatisfaction with the current direction of the title, they keep buying it to see what happens next. Other titles doing well for Marvel right now include *Thunderstrike*, *Avengers* (due to the 30th anniversary and upcoming X-Men crossover) and *Venom*. Sales of the first *Venom* miniseries declined near the end, but shorter miniseries and the use of different creative teams have increased sales again. Back issues of *Venom: Lethal Protector* sell well at guide and we recently sold a gold *Venom* #1 for $45 US ($60 CAN).

DC - What can be said about Batman and Superman that hasn't been said in these pages over and over again. Both characters have been hot all year long and neither one shows any sign of letting up. We cut our orders somewhat on the *Superman* titles anticipating the usual drop-off after a big storyline and, were we wrong!

Demand has remained as high as ever for all the *Superman* titles so as a result we have been selling out within a day or two each week. The Death and Funeral trade paperbacks continue to be steady sellers week after week. And even though demand has slowed a bit on Doomsday back issues, *Superman* #75 keeps selling out at $27 US ($35 CAN).

Knightfall back issues are still selling very quickly at guide, especially parts one and eleven. *Sword of Azrael* #1 seems to be easier to find in this area and has slowed somewhat but #2-4 sell well at guide and *Vengence of Bane* doesn't last long at $23 US ($30 CAN). *Knightquest* has picked up right where *Knightfall* left off with solid sales. All this bat-mania seems to have rubbed off on *Catwoman* which is currently selling at *Knightquest* levels.

Two surprise hits from DC have been *Golden Age* and *Metal Men*. The latter was simply a fun story that read just like the 60's *Metal Men*. In stark contrast, the story in *Golden Age* presented a very dark, almost *Watchmen* like look at some of DC's earliest heroes.

Image/Valiant - *Spawn* continues to be the best-selling Image title both as a new issue and back issue. *Spawn* #1-4 sell as fast as we can get them. #1 and #4 sell for $12 US ($15 CAN) each and #2 & #3 for $8 US ($10 CAN) each. Sales on *Savage Dragon* have been steadily rising while the rest of the line remains steady.

Valiant sales dropped off quite a bit over the Summer but have now stabilized. *Turok* sells the best right now and interest is high for *Ninjak*.

Malibu/Ultraverse - *Star Trek: Deep Space 9* sold very well and is currently outselling the DC *Star Treks* by about 50%. Demand for Ultraverse titles has steadily been building and they are now selling close to Valiant numbers. There is also a lot of anticipation right now for their upcoming creator-owned line starting with Jim Starlin's *Breed* in January.

Dark Horse - *Aliens vs. Predator* is doing very well so far and everyone is looking forward to the upcoming *Star Wars: Tales of the Jedi*. With the high prices *Dark Empire* now commands we expect *Tales of the Jedi* to be snatched up quickly.

Also of note, we recently sold a *Predator vs. Magnus* #1 Platinum for $45 US ($60 CAN).

Back Issues - The wealth of new issues available continues to draw dollars away from back issues. Many collectors are holding out for top grade material which is becoming increasingly harder to find. However, we've had some success lately buying low to mid-grade collections and pricing at or below guide. Some recent sales include: *World's Finest* #95 GD at $15 US ($20 CAN) and *Star Trek*(Gold Key) #33 VG and #36 VG at $9 US ($12 CAN) each.

In Summary - The cream always rises to the top. No matter how many titles are published, people will always support quality. Until next time... happy reading!

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MATT BRADY
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Greetings from Western Pennsylvania! Todd is too busy moving and expanding our second store to write this month, so the chore goes to me, the lowly assistant manager. As we slide into the end of the year, we're still awaiting the traditional Fall slowdown of sales, but it doesn't look as if it's coming this year. With all the Supes and Bats, new universes, X-Changes, and not to mention quality coming out of the publishing houses this year, collector interest has remained high all year long. Great for us, sorry about your allowances kids. Onward...

Golden Age - The only movement we saw was a collection of miscellaneous books from the 30's and 40's that we took to Detroit recently. They were gone fast. Other dealers were virtually fighting

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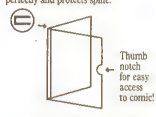

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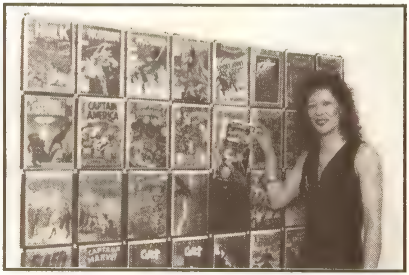

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for the opportunity to buy the books from us. Needless to say, we sold 'em!

Silver Age - We recently acquired complete runs of *Avengers* and *JLA* from a guy who collected them to read them (gasp!). Quality may not be the highest, but we're managing to move them on to other collectors who want them to read also. Other than that, just standard movement in the Silver Age books, with early Marvels leading and DC in at second. Silver Age sales make up a portion of our sales, but it would be a larger portion if we had more. Again, the key word: condition, condition, condition!

Current Books - DC: Bat-books lead the pack, including strong sales on *Robin* and *Catwoman*. *Superman* books seem to have leveled off after the down slide. Nothing going for even guide prices. *Lois and Clark* is great, but the sales increase isn't there. Let's hope DC doesn't have plans to make the comic closer to the show. (Anyone remember a Batman drawn to look like Adam West—eeeuuuu!)

Green Lantern #46, where are you? Watch for those crossovers! Vertigo titles always are good sellers with very strong audiences for *Hellblazer*, *Sandman*, *Shade*, and some for *Black Orchid*. Interest in *Doom Patrol* seems to be on a downward spin. This was never an easy book to get people interested in anyway. We're expecting increases on *Shade* with the John Constantine crossover.

Children's Crusade interest increases every day. Watch for increases on *Sandman* as speculators may jump on for Gaiman's final ride. Other Vertigo titles sell well, but it usually takes customers some time to get warmed up to the ideas that some of the titles put forward. *Scarab* sells modestly, as does *The Extremist* and the other Vertigo minis. *Outsiders* sells OK, but who wants to buy a book with at least 7 well-developed characters who have a long past that isn't well explained?

Other strong sellers for us are: *Flash*, *Aquaman*, and the *Star Trek* books. Thanks to DC for the TPB's for Christmas—can we say Knightfall stocking stuffers?

Marvel: Hmmmm. Earlier this year, I couldn't actually recommend reading the X-titles. Look at the art (love the Kubert!) yes, but read no. Has anyone noticed? The stories are being told a bit better these days. The art is somewhat consistent too. *Fatal Attractions* flew off the shelves, and the X-Men/Avengers crossover looks ready to follow. We may not be talking about Vertigo-caliber writing, but they're approaching the readable and coherent.

The 2099 titles sell OK, with *X-Men* leading. Ravage should be shot by Punisher 2099, just so I could move the stack that sits there off the shelf. Loads of interest in *Daredevil*, as everyone awaits the final Devilfall (followed by Devilquest?). *Man Without Fear* sells very well despite the price.

Midnight Sons titles are dropping before our very eyes—this may change with David Quinn coming on to write *Dr. Strange*. For those of you who don't know who he is, I have one word… Faust. Watch out for this and *Hellstrom* to be big with the Vertigo crowd that normally looks at Marvels with great disdain. Marvel UK sales bite, but the books look pretty just sitting on the shelves.

Gambit anticipation is mighty high. Sales on *Venom: The Madness* were good, better when we cross-marketed the book to Kelly Jones and Ann Nocenti fans, Wolverine-bone claws? Who's bonehead idea was that?!? *Spidey* sells well, and interest grows for the big "revelation" issue of *Spider-Man Unlimited* (poor Aunt May, the heart attack will kill her—unless Carnage gets to her first). Heavy Hitters are DOA except for the adolescent fantasy, *Sachs & Violens*. Could you imagine if Beavis and Butthead got a hold of this book? Peter and George make the fast buck. How about Avengersfall please? Sales are slow on this book.

Dark Horse: *Aliens* and *Predators* titles sell well, with rumors of the movie and video game helping some. Collector interest in *Deadliest of the Species* is high, but bi-monthly for 12 issues? Wake me in 1995 when the trade paperback comes out. Back issue sales with *Aliens* or *Predators* in DHP or DHC remain to be great bargains in out lower-priced boxes. *Comics Greatest World* and its titles sell well, while other Dark Horse titles (*Next Men*, *Indy* books, etc.), while of great quality, seem to have found their niche and have a hard time growing in sales. Kudos to Dark Horse for offering a diverse line of material to attract virtually all types of readers.

Image: Don't' get me started.

Others: Ultraverse continues to sell well. Well-written, slick, new (and on-time) books draw reader loyalty. *Rune* looks to be mega hot, while *Firearm* and *Prime* continue to move well. Could we please have an Adam Hughes issue of *Mantra*? *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* does well, but hopefully will do better as fan interest in the show grows and once it is the only new Star Trek on TV.

Valiant does okay, just. New projects just don't look promising to me.

Others: *Bone* rules! Everybody should read this book!

Hot and on the Horizon - *Zero Hour*, *Bongo Comics*, *Batman/Judge Dredd II*, *Magnus/Nexus*, *Legend* stuff from Dark Horse, *Batman: In Darkest Knight*, and *Sin City II*.

On My Soapbox - There's a reason there are comics writers and comics artists. Sometimes, one person can do both. Other times both benefit by working together. Established writers didn't (for the most part) start yesterday. They have honed their skills over years of experience and hundreds of books. This shows in their work. Example: read *WildCAT.S* TBM, or one of the current Marvel bottom 20 titles, then read the return of Barry Allen (*Flash* #73-79), or a run of *Next Men*, or even *Sandman*. Then ask yourself: who makes me care about what happens to these characters? Who gives their characters life? Who cares about the characters as characters, not a merchandising tool? It's worth thinking about.

Publisher's Note: The following Market Reports are the express opinion of the individual reporters and are not necessarily the opinion of Overstreet's Comic Book Monthly, Overstreet Publications, its staff, or its advertisers

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Introduction

Welcome to another issue of *Overstreet's Comic Book Monthly* the most accurate and dependable Price Guide magazine for comic books and non-sports cards in the nation!

The first Overstreet COMIC BOOK PRICE GUIDE was published in 1970 and has been published every year since then. The first issue of Overstreet's Comic Book Price Update (supplement to the annual Overstreet Price Guide #12) was published in the Fall of 1982. After a few years of publishing a mid-year Update, the comic market finally demanded a more frequent price report. The Update eventually became a bi-monthly, Overstreet's Comic Book Monthly is now the official monthly price guide magazine for Overstreet Publications

GENERAL INFORMATION

About Pricing. The prices shown in the price guide section represent an honest and responsible evaluation of current market values. The prices represent an average of dealer retail prices compiled from data supplied by our Board Of Special Advisors Prices often vary widely from region to region because supply and demand factors often vary Therefore, each buyer and seller should determine prices based on both prices listed here and regionally specific supply and demand factors

The Listed Prices in this Guide, particularly on more expensive books, are a "moving average" of the market prices realized over the past month. Thus prices are constantly being recorded and averaged prior to the release of each issue. It is important for collectors to understand that since the Overstreet price is an average, it will never be the same as the highest or lowest most recent sale price

Collectors will, at some point, attempt to sell some or all of their acquisitions at a wholesale price to dealers. It is important to remember that dealers buy comics in order to resell them to other collectors. Therefore, dealers will always pay a higher percentage for issues that they think can be sold quickly and a much lower percentage for items that have a low demand. Dealers must always buy at a percentage that allows for their overhead, plus a fair margin of profit. Most dealers will pay anywhere from 25-75% of the prices listed in this guide depending on inventory needs and local market conditions. However, material from the past 10 to 15 years is readily available and dealers may only offer a very small amount (20% or less) or may not be interested at all.

PRICING NEW COMICS:

This guide lists retail prices of most current comic books. The latest issues are usually listed at cover price, except in certain cases when market conditions warrant.

PRICING LOWER GRADES

Prices listed in this Guide are for comic books in Very Good (VG), Very Fine (VF) & Near Mint (NM) condition The value of a comic in a lower grade is a specific percentage of the near mint value. To find the correct price spread for a specific book, consult the annual *Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide*. Please note, however, that price spreads vary, based on many factors including demand, rarity in grade, and overall rarity

PRICING INDICATORS

- ♦ An issue that has increased in price since last issue
- - An issue that has decreased in price since last issue
- H A high demand issue that is currently in vogue

GRADING COMICS

Grading comic books is essentially describing its condition, which may range from absolutely perfect "newsstand" condition (MINT) to extremely worn, dirty, and torn (POOR) For a more detailed instruction on the art of grading comic books, consult *The Overstreet Comic Book Grading Guide* available in most book stores, comic specialty shops, or direct from Overstreet Publications.

POLYBAGGED COMICS

It is the official policy of Overstreet Publications to grade comics regardless of whether they are still sealed in their polybag or not. The polybag and it's entire contents may be preserved so that all components of the original manufactured product remain together

RESTORED COMICS

Since this hobby began it has always been tempting for the dealer or collector to perform repairs on comic books In the past, tape was used to seal tears, rips, loose covers, and centerfolds and spine reinforcement. It is now known that many tapes are very damaging to paper. Today, most repairs are done with neutral pH glues, special invisible papers, and webbing reinforcement

For years now, comic books have had minor to major restoration work performed. It is very important for the novice collector to understand that most repaired/restored books are not worth the same as books in the same grade in their ***original*** condition The more expensive the book, the more likely it has been restored After restoration, these books are not actually in higher grades, but are altered lower grade books that are described by their **Apparent Grade** Some books do need to be repaired and/or restored to improve to preserve them

Note: The lower the grade, the less objectionable repairs/restoration become In fact, low grade books sell better when they have been cleaned to achieve a better visual appeal. Whenever possible, books should be examined very closely for repairs and restoration before purchase. Some of the major things to look for are: bleached/whitened pages and covers, trimmed pages and covers, spine and tear reinforcement, glue, replaced staples, replaced sections of the cover, wrinkles pressed from covers, recolored (color touch) and reglossed covers.

Dealers should disclose any known restoration at the time of sale. Any restoration is considered a defect because it is an alteration of the original condition of the book

GRADING DEFINITIONS

The hardest part of evaluating a comic is being objective, and knowing what characteristics to look for in making your assessment. Very important: A book must be graded in its entirety, considering all defects. Do not grade just the cover alone. A book in any of the grades listed must be in **Original Unrestored Condition**. Restored books must be described as such. After examining a comic book thoroughly, one of the following grades may be assigned :

The 8 Nomenclature Grades and The Overstreet Numerical Equivalent

	Numerical Grade			
Grade/abbreviation	High	Center	Low	Point Spread
Mint (MT)	100	99	98	(3)
Near Mint (NM)	97	94	90	(8)
Very Fine (VF)	89	82	75	(15)
Fine (FN)	74	65	55	(20)
Very Good (VG)	54	45	35	(20)
Good (GD)	34	25	15	(20)
Fair (FR)	14	10	5	(10)
Poor (PR)	4	3	1	(4)

*THE EIGHT NOMENCLATURE GRADES AND THEIR NUMERIC RANGE**

MINT (MT) (ONE 100-98) Near perfect in every way Only the most subtle bindery or printing defects are allowed Cover is flat with no surface wear. Cover inks are bright with high reflectivity and minimal fading. Corners are cut square and sharp. Staples are generally centered and clean with no rust. Cover is generally centered and firmly secured to interior pages. Paper is supple and fresh. Spine is tight and flat.

NEAR MINT (NM) (ONE 97-90) Nearly perfect. Cover is flat with no surface wear Cover inks are bright with high reflectivity and minimum of fading. Corners are cut square and sharp with ever so slight blunting permitted. Staples are generally centered, clean with no rust. Cover is well centered and firmly secured to interior pages. Paper is supple and like new. Spine is tight and flat

VERY FINE (VF) (ONE 89-75) An excellent copy with outstanding eye appeal. Sharp, bright and clean with supple pages Pages and covers can be yellowish/tannish (at the least) but not brown and will usually be off-white to white.

FINE (FN) (ONE 74-55) An exceptional, above average copy that shows minor wear but still relatively flat, clean and glossy with no subscription crease or brown margins. Typical defects include: light spine wear, minor surface wear, a light crease, minor yellowing/tanning to interior pages. Compared to a VF, cover inks are beginning to show a significant reduction in reflectivity but is still highly collectible and desirable

VERY GOOD (VG) (ONE 54-35) The average used comic book most commonly found This comic shows moderate wear but eye appeal has not been reduced to the point that it is not desirable One or two minor markings on cover or minor spine roll are allowed. Lightly creased along spine or extremities, subscription crease, loose centerfold, or minor chip or piece missing allowed

GOOD (GD) (ONE 34-15) This comic has all pages and covers, although there may be small pieces missing. Commonly creased, scuffed, abraded and soiled, but books in this grade are completely readable. Paper quality is low but not brittle

FAIR (FR) (ONE 14-5) Very heavily read and soiled, but still complete. Damaged beyond collectibility for most collectors, brings 30-50 per cent of the Good price.

POOR (PR) (ONE 4-1) Sufficiently degraded so as to have little or no collector value Often severely stained, abraded, defaced, or damaged beyond readability.

* The Numeric Ranges from Poor to Mint are further explained in *The Overstreet Comic Book Grading Guide*

The graph at left illustrates the Overstreet Nomenclature Grades and their corresponding numeric range:

Adventure #428, © DC

ACTION COMICS (Worth #601 &+2)
Dec, 1954-Present
National Periodical Publ./DC Comics
1 Reprint, 1988, 50¢ c — 0.50
201-Last pre-code issue — 50.00 — 125.00 — 175.00
202-220 — 43.00 — 107.00 — 150.00
221-240 — 34.00 — 86.00 — 120.00
241, 243-251 Last Tommy Tomorrow — 26.00 — 64.00 — 90.00
242-Origin & 1st app. Brainiac — 200.00 — 500.00 — 700.00 — H
252-Origin & 1st app. Supergirl, re-intro of Metallo, last 2nd appearance since Superboy #49 — 214.00 — 536.00 — 750.00 — H
253-2nd app Supergirl — 43.00 — 107.00 — 150.00 — H
254-1st meeting Of Bizarro & Superman — 59.00 — 96.00 — 135.00 — H
255-1st Bizarro Lois Lane — 26.00 — 64.00 — 90.00
256-261 — 20.00 — 45.00 — 60.00
262, 264-266, 268-270 — 17.00 — 34.00 — 45.00
263-Origin Bizarro World — 19.00 — 46.00 — 65.00 — H
267-3rd Legion app. — 79.00 — 196.00 — 275.00 — H
271-275, 277-282: 282-Last 10¢ issue — 13.00 — 30.00 — 40.00
276-6th Legion app. — 34.00 — 86.00 — 120.00
283-Legion Of Super-Villains app. — 17.00 — 38.00 — 50.00
284-Mon-El app. — 17.00 — 38.00 — 50.00
285-12th Legion app. — 17.00 — 38.00 — 50.00
286-289 — 9.00 — 20.00 — 26.00
290(7/62)-17th Legion app; Phantom Girl app. — 9.00 — 20.00 — 26.00
291, 292, 294-299 — 6.50 — 11.70 — 18.00
293-Origin Comet — 13.00 — 29.00 — 38.00
300-(5/63) — 7.00 — 15.00 — 20.00
301-303, 305-308, 310-320 — 4.20 — 7.80 — 12.00
304-Origin & 1st app. of Black Flame — 5.50 — 9.80 — 15.00
309-Legion app — 4.90 — 9.10 — 14.00
321-333, 335-340 — 3.20 — 5.90 — 9.00
334-Giant (6/20) — 5.60 — 10.40 — 16.00
341-346: 346-4/69 — 2.20 — 4.20 — 6.50
347-360 (Giants G-33 & G-45) — 3.50 — 6.50 — 10.00
361-374, 376-380 — 1.80 — 3.30 — 5.00
375-Giant (6/57) — 2.80 — 5.20 — 8.00
381-424: 411-Eclipso origin-r — 1.40 — 2.60 — 4.00
425-Adams art — 2.10 — 3.90 — 6.00
426-436, 438, 439 — 1.10 — 2.00 — 3.00
437, 443-(100 page giants) — 1.80 — 3.30 — 5.00
440-1st Grell-a on Green Arrow — 2.10 — 3.90 — 6.00
441-Grell-a on Green Arrow — 1.80 — 3.30 — 5.00
442, 444-499 — 0.90 — 1.60 — 2.50
500-Superman life story (1 00, 68pgs) — 0.70 — 1.30 — 2.00
501-551, 554-582 — 0.50 — 1.00 — 1.50
552, 553-Unreal Man o/s — 2.16 — 3.90 — 6.00
583-Alan Moore — 2.50 — 6.60 — 7.00
584-Byrne begins — 0.50 — 1.00 — 1.50
585-599: 598-1st app. Cheetkamate — 0.40 — 0.70 — 1.00
600-(2.50, 84 pgs.) — 1.40 — 2.60 — 4.00
601-642 (1.50, 52 pgs.): 611-614: Catwoman — 0.50 — 1.00 — 1.50
643-Monthly begins, Perez o/a, scripts — 0.50 — 1.00 — 1.50
644-649, 651-661, 663-666, 668-679: 644-Perez-a begins; 679-Last 1.00-c — 0.40 — 0.70 — 1.00
650-(1.50, 52 pgs.)-Lobo comes — 0.50 — 1.00 — 1.50
663-Superman reveals id to Lois Lane — 1.20 — 2.30 — 3.50
667-(1.75, 52 pgs.) — 0.60 — 1.10 — 1.75
680-682 — 0.40 — 0.80 — 1.25
683-Doomsday comes — 2.60 — 4.90 — 7.50 — H
683-2nd & 3rd printings — 0.40 — 0.80 — 1.25
684-Doomsday battle issue — 2.80 — 5.20 — 8.00 — H
685, 686-Funeral For A Friend pts.; Supergirl app — 0.70 — 1.30 — 2.00 — H
685-2nd & 3rd printings — 0.40 — 0.80 — 1.25
687-(1.95)-Collector's Ed. w/die-cut-c — 0.70 — 1.30 — 2.00
687-(1.50)-Newsstand Ed. w/mm-poster — 0.50 — 1.00 — 1.50
688-693 (1.50). 688-Guy Gardner-o/s — 0.50 — 1.00 — 1.50
Annual 1 ('87)-Arthur Adams-a; Batman app. — 2.10 — 3.90 — 6.00
Annual 2 ('89, 1.75)-Perez-c/a — 0.70 — 1.30 — 2.00
Annual 3 ('91, 2.00, 68 pgs.) — 0.70 — 1.30 — 2.00
Annual 4, 5 ('92-'93, 2.50) — 0.90 — 1.60 — 2.50

ADAM-12 (TV)
Dec, '73*5-No 10, Feb, 1976 (Photo covers)
Gold Key
1 — 6.30 — 11.70 — 18.00
2-10 — 2.80 — 5.20 — 8.00

ADDAMS FAMILY (TV cartoon)
Oct, 1973-No 3, Apr, 1975 (Hanna-Barbera)
Gold Key
1 — 10.00 — 23.00 — 30.00 — H
2, 3 — 6.30 — 11.70 — 18.00 — H

ADVENTURE COMICS
No. 200, May,1954-No. 503, Sept, 1983
National Periodical Publications/DC Comics
200 — 79.00 — 196.00 — 275.00
201-209 — 54.00 — 136.00 — 190.00
210-1st app. Krypto — 471.00 — 1,285.00 — 1,875.00 — + H
211-213, 215-220 — 43.00 — 107.00 — 150.00
214-2nd app. Krypto — 57.00 — 143.00 — 200.00 — H
221-240: 241-Batman x-over (6/58) — 37.00 — 93.00 — 130.00
247-1st app. Legion Of Super Heroes (4/58) — 743.00 — 1,857.00 — 2,600.00
248-252, 254, 255: Green Arrow in all — 27.00 — 68.00 — 95.00
253-Superboy/Robin first meet — 37.00 — 93.00 — 130.00 — H
256-Origin Green Arrow — 107.00 — 268.00 — 375.00 — H
257-259 — 24.00 — 61.00 — 85.00
260-1st Silver Age origin of Aquaman (5/59) — 109.00 — 271.00 — 380.00 — H
261-266, 268, 270: 266-(11/59)-Aquagirl (origin/1st app.); not same as later character — 17.00 — 43.00 — 60.00
267-2nd Legion Of Superheroes — 164.00 — 411.00 — 575.00 — H
269-Intro Aqualad — 36.00 — 89.00 — 125.00 — H
271-Origin Luthor retold — 40.00 — 100.00 — 140.00 — H
272-274, 276-280: 276-3rd Metallo — 15.00 — 34.00 — 45.00
275-Origin Superman/Batman team retold — 29.00 — 71.00 — 100.00 — H
281, 284, 287-289: 288-Bizarro cover — 15.00 — 34.00 — 45.00
282-5th Legion app. — 29.00 — 71.00 — 100.00
283-Intro Phantom Zone — 21.00 — 54.00 — 75.00
285-1st Bizarro World story in Adv. — 20.00 — 50.00 — 70.00
286-1st Bizarro Mxyzptlk — 20.00 — 45.00 — 60.00
290-8th Legion app., last 10¢ issue — 26.00 — 64.00 — 90.00
291, 292, 295-298: 295-Bizarro-c — 10.00 — 23.00 — 30.00
293-15th Legion app. — 20.00 — 45.00 — 60.00
294-1st Bizarro M. Monroe, Pres. Kennedy — 20.00 — 45.00 — 60.00 — H
299-1st Gold Kryptonite (8/62) — 12.00 — 26.00 — 35.00
300-Legion series begins (9/62) — 76.00 — 189.00 — 265.00
301-Origin Bouncing Bos — 23.00 — 57.00 — 80.00
302-305 — 17.00 — 38.00 — 50.00
306-310 — 13.00 — 29.00 — 38.00
311-320 — 9.00 — 21.00 — 28.00
321-Intro Time Trapper — 7.00 — 17.00 — 22.00
322-330: 327-Intro Lore Wolf in Legion — 7.00 — 15.00 — 20.00
331-340 — 5.60 — 10.40 — 16.00
341-Triplicate Girl becomes Duo Damsel — 4.20 — 7.80 — 12.00
342-345, 347, 350, 351 — 3.20 — 5.90 — 9.00
346, 348, 349 — 3.50 — 6.50 — 10.00
352, 354-360 — 2.80 — 5.20 — 8.00
353-Death of Ferro Lad in Legion — 4.60 — 8.50 — 13.00
361-364, 366, 368-370 — 2.10 — 3.90 — 6.00
365, 367, 371, 372 — 2.50 — 4.60 — 7.00
373, 374, 376-380: 380-Last Legion in Adv. — 2.10 — 3.90 — 6.00
375-Intro Quantum Queen — 2.50 — 4.60 — 7.00
381-Supergirl begins (1st full length story, 6/69) — 0.70 — 1.30 — 2.00
382-388, 391-400 — 0.70 — 1.30 — 2.00
390, 403-(80 pg. giants G-81 & G-81) — 2.10 — 3.90 — 6.00
401, 402, 404-410: 52 pg. issues — 0.70 — 1.30 — 2.00
405-Giant G-81; Legion-r — 1.80 — 3.30 — 5.00
411, 413, 418, 419: 36 pg. Issues — 0.40 — 0.70 — 1.00
412-r/origin & 1st Animal Man/Str. Adv. — 1.40 — 2.60 — 4.00
414-r/2nd Animal Man/Str. Adv. — 1.10 — 2.00 — 3.00
415, 420-Animal Man reprints — 0.50 — 1.00 — 1.50
416-Giant DC-10; G.A.-r — 0.40 — 0.80 — 1.20
417-Vigilante; Frazetta Shining Knight-r — 0.40 — 0.80 — 1.20
421-424 — 0.40 — 0.70 — 1.00
425-New look begins — 0.50 — 1.00 — 1.50
426-427, 431-438: 435-Mike Grell's 1st-a — 0.40 — 0.70 — 1.00
428-1st app. Black Orchid (6-7/73) — 2.30 — 4.20 — 6.50 — + H
429-436-Black Orchid app. — 1.10 — 2.00 — 3.00 — H
439, 460-New Gods/Darkseid story concludes from New Gods #19 (#439 is dated 9-10/78) w/o missing a month — 1.10 — 2.00 — 3.00 — +
461, 462: Death of Earth II Batman — 1.40 — 2.60 — 4.00
463-466 — 0.40 — 0.70 — 1.00
467-Starman by Dixon, Plastic Man begin — 0.50 — 1.00 — 1.50
468-490: Last comic-size iss. — 0.40 — 0.70 — 1.00
491-499, 501-100 pg. digests begin — 0.40 — 0.80 — 1.20
500-All Legion reprints — 0.60 — 1.00 — 1.60
501-505: Golden Age reprints — 0.40 — 0.80 — 1.20

ADVENTURES INTO THE UNKNOWN
No. 51, Jun,1954-No. 174, Aug, 1967
American Comics Group
51(3-D effect-c/story)-Only white-c — 36.00 — 89.00 — 125.00 — H
52-58 (3-D effect-c/stories)-Black-c — 31.00 — 79.00 — 110.00 — H
59-3-D effect story only — 20.00 — 50.00 — 70.00 — H
60-Woodes que-a by Landau — 13.00 — 30.00 — 40.00 — H
61-Last pre-code issue (1-2/55) — 12.00 — 26.00 — 35.00 — H
62-78 — 8.00 — 19.00 — 25.00
79-90 — 6.00 — 12.00 — 18.00
91,96(#95 on inside),107,116-All contain Williamson-a — 8.00 — 19.00 — 25.00
92-95,97-99,101-106,108-115,117-127 — 6.00 — 10.00 — 16.00
100 — 7.00 — 15.00 — 20.00
128-Williamson/Krenkel/Torres-r; last 10¢ — 6.00 — 10.00 — 16.00
129-150 — 5.00 — 9.00 — 14.00
151-153: 153-Magic Agent app. — 4.00 — 8.00 — 12.00
154-Nemesis begins (origin), ends #170 — 6.00 — 10.00 — 16.00
155-167, 169-174: 157-Magic Agent app. — 4.00 — 8.00 — 12.00
168-Ditko-a(p) — 5.00 — 9.00 — 14.00

ADVENTURES OF BOB HOPE, THE
No. 32, Apr-May, 1955-No. 109, Feb-Mar, 1968
National Periodical Publications
32-40: 32-1st code approved issue — 17.00 — 38.00 — 50.00
41-50 — 13.00 — 30.00 — 40.00
51-70 — 9.00 — 20.00 — 26.00
71-93, 95-105, 95-1st monster issue (11/65) — 5.00 — 9.00 — 14.00
94-Aquaman cameo — 6.00 — 10.00 — 16.00
106-109-Monster-c/s by N. Adams-c/a — 9.00 — 20.00 — 26.00

ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN AMERICA
Sept, 1991-No 4, Jun, 1992 (4.95, color, mini-series)
Marvel Comics
1-Embossed-c — 2.00 — 3.00 — 5.00
2-4: Austin-c/a(i) — 2.00 — 3.00 — 5.00

ADVENTURES OF JERRY LEWIS, THE
(Adv. of Dean Martin & Jerry Lewis No. 1-40) (See Super DC Giant)
No. 41, Nov, 1957-No. 124, May-June, 1971
National Periodical Publications
41-60 — 8.00 — 19.00 — 25.00
61-80: 68, 74-Photo-c — 7.00 — 15.00 — 20.00
81-91,93-96,98-100: 89-Bob Hope app — 4.00 — 8.00 — 12.00
92-Superman cameo — 6.00 — 10.00 — 16.00
97-Batman/Robin x-over; Joker-c/story — 8.00 — 19.00 — 25.00
101-104-Neal Adams-c/a — 7.00 — 15.00 — 20.00
102-Beatles app. — 8.00 — 18.00 — 24.00
105-Superman x-over — 6.00 — 9.00 — 14.00
106-111,113-116 — 3.00 — 4.00 — 6.00
112-Flash x-over — 6.00 — 9.00 — 14.00
117-Wonder Woman x-over — 3.00 — 5.00 — 8.00
118-124 — 2.00 — 3.00 — 5.00

ADVENTURES OF MIGHTY MOUSE (Formerly Mighty Mouse)
No. 166, Mar 1979-No. 172, Jun, 1980
Gold Key
166-172 — 2.00 — 3.00 — 5.00

ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN (Formerly Superman)
Jan. 1987-Present
DC Comics

424	0.70	1.30	2.00
425-449; 449-Invasion	0.60	1.10	1.75
450-463; 463-Superman/Flash race	0.50	1.00	1.50
464-Lobo c/app. pre-dates Lobo #1	1.70	2.60	4.00
465-479; 481-491; 491-Last $1.00-c	0.50	0.70	1.00
480-(1.75, 52 pgs.)	0.70	1.30	1.75
492-495	0.50	0.80	1.25
496-Doomsday cameo	2.10	3.50	5.00 H
496, 497-2nd printings	0.50	0.80	1.25
497-Doomsday battle iss.	2.50	3.90	6.00 H
498, 499-Funeral for a friend; Supergirl app.	1.50	2.60	3.00 H
498-2nd & 3rd printings	0.50	0.80	1.25
500-(2.95, 68 pgs.)-Collector's Ed. w/card	1.50	2.00	3.00
500-(2.50, 68 pgs.)-Reg. Ed. w/different c	1.00	1.50	2.00
500-Platinum Edition	27.00	68.00	95.00
501-(1.95)-Collector's Ed. w/die-cut c	0.80	1.50	2.00
501-(1.50)-Regular Ed. w/mini-poster, diff. c	0.50	1.00	1.50
502-506; 502-Supergirl c/story	0.50	1.00	1.50
505-(2.50)-Holo-graph foil c ed.	0.90	1.60	2.50
Annual 1 ('87)	0.60	0.90	1.40
Annual 2 ('90)-Lobo app.	0.80	1.50	2.00
Annual 3 ('91, 2.00)-Armageddon 2001	0.80	1.50	2.00
Annual 4 ('92, 2.50)-Gen Gardner/Lobo c/story	1.00	1.60	2.50
Annual 5 ('93, 2.50)-Bloodlines Earthplague	1.00	1.60	2.50

ADVENTURES OF THE FLY (The Fly #1-4; becomes Fly Man #32-39)
Aug. 1959-No. 30, Oct. 1964; No. 31, May. 1965
Archie Publications, Radio Comics

1-Shield app., origin The Fly; S&k c/a	93.00	232.00	325.00 H
2-Williamson, S&k	50.00	125.00	175.00
3-Origin retold	36.00	89.00	125.00 +
4-S&k-c; Powell-a, Shield x-over	23.00	57.00	80.00
5 thr. 7-1st N.A. app. Black Hood, 8-1st S.A. app. Shield (also in #9)	17.00	39.00	52.00
11-13, 15-20; 20-Origin Flygirl retold	11.00	24.00	32.00
14-Intro & origin Flygirl	15.00	34.00	45.00
21-39; 36-1st S.A. app. Comet	7.00	17.00	22.00
31-Black Hood, Shield, Comet app.	8.00	19.00	25.00

ADVENTURES OF THE JAGUAR, THE
Sept. 1961-No. 15, Nov. 1965
Archie Publications (Radio Comics)

1-Origin & 1st app. The Jaguar	31.00	79.00	110.00
2-3; 3-Last 10¢ issue	18.00	41.00	55.00
4-6-Camparl app.	13.00	30.00	40.00
7-10	9.00	21.00	28.00
11-15; 14,15-Camparl, Black Hood app.	7.00	17.00	22.00

ADVENTURES ON THE PLANET OF THE APES
Oct. 1975-No. 11, Dec. 1976
Marvel Comics Group

1-effluent of the Apes in color; Starlin-c	1.30	2.00	3.00
2-5	0.90	1.40	2.20
6-11-6-Starlin-c	0.60	1.20	1.80

AGENT THREE-ZERO
Sept. 1995-Present (3.95, color, 52 pgs.)
Galaxyworks Inc.

1-Polybagged w/card & mini-poster	1.40	2.60	4.00

AKIRA
Sept. 1988-No. 37, 1993 (3.50, color, deluxe)
Epic Comics

1	5.50	9.80	15.00
1, 2-2nd printings	1.20	2.30	3.50
2	3.20	5.90	9.00
3-5	2.60	4.90	7.50
6-13	1.90	3.60	5.50
16-33; 17-Begin 3.95-c	1.20	2.30	3.50
34, 35-(4.95-c)	1.80	3.30	5.00

ALBEDO
Apr. 1983-No. 14, Spring, 1989 (B&W)
Thoughts And Images

0-Yellow cover, 50 copies	15.00	34.00	45.00
0-White cover, 450 copies	12.00	26.00	35.00
0-Blue, 1st printing, 500 copies	4.00	8.00	12.00
0-Blue, 2nd printing, 1000 copies	3.00	5.00	8.00
0-3rd print	0.70	1.30	2.00
0-4th print	0.40	0.80	1.20
1-Dark red, 1st app. Usagi Yojimbo	3.20	5.90	9.00
1-Bright red	3.20	5.90	9.00
2	2.10	3.90	6.00
3-14	0.70	1.30	2.00

ALF (TV)
Mar. 1988-No. 50, Feb. 1991 (1.00, color)
Marvel Comics

1-49; 22-X-Men parody	0.40	0.70	1.00
50-(1.75, 52 pgs.)-Photo-c	0.60	1.10	1.75
Annual 1-3 ('88, '89, '90)	0.60	1.10	1.75
Holiday Special 1 (1.75, 68 pgs.)	0.60	1.10	1.75
Holiday Special 2 (1989, 2.00, 68 pgs.)	0.70	1.30	2.00
Spring Special 1 (1989, 1.75)	0.60	1.10	1.75

ALIEN LEGION: BINARY DEEP
1993 (3.50, color, one-shot, 52 pgs.)
Epic Comics (Marvel)
nn-With bound-in trading card 1.20 2.30 3.50

ALIENS, THE (Captain Johner and...) (Also see Magnus Robot Fighter)
Sept-Dec, 1967; No. 2, May. 1982
Gold Key

1-Reprints from Magnus #1,3,4,6-10, all by Russ Manning	5.00	10.00	15.00
2-Reprints from Magnus #1 by Manning	1.40	2.60	4.00

ALIENS (Also see Dark Horse Presents #2-4)
May 1988-No. 6, July, 1989 (1.95, B&W, mini-series)
Dark Horse Comics

1-1st appearance Aliens in comics	11.00	25.00	33.00
1-Second printing	3.20	5.90	9.00
1-Third - Sixth printings	0.70	1.30	2.00
2	8.00	18.00	24.00
2-Second printing	1.40	2.60	4.00
2-Third printing	0.70	1.30	2.00
3	4.20	7.80	12.00
4	2.80	5.20	8.00
5, 6	2.10	3.90	6.00
3-6- 2nd printings	0.70	1.30	2.00

ALIENS MINI COMIC 1 (2.95, 4x6") Included in Aliens Portfolio
Aliens Platinum Edition (See Dark Horse Presents...) 3.50 6.50 10.00

ALIENS
V2 #1, Aug. 1989-No. 4, 1990 (2.25, color, mini-series)
Dark Horse Comics

V2 #1	4.20	7.80	12.00
V2 #1- 2nd printing ('90, 2.25)	0.80	1.50	2.25
2-4	2.10	3.90	6.00

ALIENS: COLONIAL MARINES
Jan.1993-No. 12, 1993 (2.50, color, limited series)
Dark Horse Comics

1-7	0.90	1.60	2.50

ALIENS: EARTH WAR
June, 1990-No. 4, Oct, 1990 (2.50, color, limited series)
Dark Horse Comics

1-Sam Kieth a(p) in all	3.50	6.50	10.00
1-2nd print	0.90	1.60	2.50
2	2.80	5.20	8.00
3, 4	2.30	4.20	6.50

ALIENS: GENOCIDE
Nov. 1991-No. 4, Feb, 1992 (2.50, color, mini-series)
Dark Horse Comics

1-4	0.90	1.60	2.50

ALIENS: HIVE
Feb. 1992-No. 4, Mar. 1992 (2.50, color, mini-series)
Dark Horse Comics

1-4: Kelley Jones-c/a in all	0.90	1.60	2.50

ALIENS: LABYRINTH
Sept. 1993-No. 4 (2.50, color, mini-series)
Dark Horse Comics

1-Painted-c	0.90	1.60	2.50

ALIENS/PREDATOR: THE DEADLIEST OF THE SPECIES
July, 1993-No. 12, 1994 (2.50, color, limited series)
Dark Horse Comics

1, 2-Bolton painted-c; Gulce-p	0.90	1.60	2.50
1-Embossed foil platinum ed. no price/no info	10.00	23.00	30.00

ALIENS: ROGUE
Apr, 1993-No. 4, July, 1993 (2.50, color, mini-series)
Dark Horse Comics

1-4	0.90	1.60	2.50

ALIENS: SACRIFICE
May, 1993 (4.95, color, one-shot, 52 pgs.)
Dark Horse Comics
nn-Peter Milligan scripts, painted-c/a 1.80 3.30 5.00

ALIENS VS. PREDATOR (see Dark Horse Presents #86)
June, 1990-No. 4, Dec. 1990 (2.50, mini series, color)
Dark Horse Comics

1	4.20	7.80	12.00
1-2nd printing	0.90	1.60	2.50
0 (July, 1990, 1.95)	5.30	9.80	15.00
2, 3	3.20	5.90	9.00
4	1.80	3.30	5.00

ALIEN 3
June, 1992-No. 3, Aug. 1992 (2.50, color, mini series)
Dark Horse Comics

1-3	0.90	1.60	2.50

ALIEN WORLDS
Dec. 1982-No. 9, Jan. 1985
Pacific Comics/Eclipse

1	0.50	1.00	1.50
2-9; 2, 4-Dave Stevens-c/a	0.40	0.70	1.00
5-D'Ale. 1-Art Adams 1st pub. art	1.10	2.00	3.00

ALL AMERICAN MEN OF WAR
No. 127, Aug-Sept, 1952-No. 117, Sept-Oct, 1966
National Periodical Publications

127 (1952)	126.00	314.00	440.00 H
128 (1952)	86.00	214.00	300.00 H
2 (12-1/52-53) - 5	71.00	179.00	250.00 H
6-10	43.00	107.00	150.00 H
11-18; Last pre-code issue	39.00	99.00	138.00 H
19-28	27.00	68.00	95.00 H
29, 30, 32-Wood-a	30.00	75.00	105.00 H
31, 33-40	21.00	54.00	75.00 +H
41-50	20.00	45.00	60.00 +H
51-66	15.00	34.00	45.00 +H
67-1st app. Gunner & Sarge, series begins	23.00	57.00	80.00 +H
68-70	15.00	33.00	44.00 H
71-80	9.00	21.00	28.00 H
81, 83-88; 87-1st app Haunted Tank 88-Last 10¢ issue	7.00	15.00	20.00 H
82-Johnny Cloud begins	12.00	26.00	35.00 H
89-100; 91-1st Haunted Tank cover	6.30	11.70	18.00 H
101-117; Johnny Cloud app. 111,115 & 117	4.90	8.10	12.50 +H

Adventures of the Jaguar #1, © Archie

Amazing Adventures #11, © Marvel

ALL-STAR SQUADRON
Sept, 1981-No. 67, Mar, 1987
DC Comics

1-46, 48-67	0.40	0.70	1.00	
47-McFarlane-a (1st full story)	1.10	2.00	3.00	
Annual 1-3 (11/82-9/84)	0.40	0.70	1.00	

ALL-STAR WESTERN (Weird Western Tales #12 on)
Aug/Sept, 1970-No. 11, Apr-May, 1972
National Periodical Publications

1	3.50	6.50	10.00	H
2-El Diablo by Morrow begins	1.20	2.30	3.50	H
3-8: 3-Origin El Diablo	1.20	2.30	3.50	H
9-Frazetta a (r), 3 pgs.	1.80	3.30	5.00	H
10-1st app. Jonah Hex (2-3/72)	17.00	45.00	60.00	+H
11-2nd app. Jonah Hex	7.00	18.00	25.00	+H

ALPHA FLIGHT (See X-Men #120, 121)
Aug, 1983-Present (#52 on are direct sale)
Marvel Comics Group

1-(52 pgs.)-Byrne-a begins; Wolverine cameo	0.90	1.60	2.50	-
2-12: 12-Double size	0.60	1.10	1.75	-
13-Wolverine app.	2.60	4.90	7.50	-
14-16: 16-Wolverine cameo	0.40	0.80	1.25	-
17-X-Men x-over; Wolverine cameo	1.60	2.90	4.50	-
18-28: Last Byrne issues	0.40	0.80	1.25	-
29-32, 35-49	0.40	0.70	1.00	-
33, 34-Wolverine app. 34-Origin retold	1.90	3.60	5.50	-
50-Double size	0.40	0.80	1.25	-
51-Jim Lee's 1st work at Marvel	2.60	4.90	7.50	-
52, 53: Wolverine; 53-Lee/Portacio-a	1.40	2.60	4.00	-
54, 63, 64-No Jim Lee art	0.40	0.70	1.00	-
55-62: Jim Lee art(p)	1.10	2.00	3.00	-
65-74, '76-86: 74-Wolverine, Spider-Man	0.40	0.80	1.25	-
75-(1.95, 52 pgs.)	0.60	1.10	1.75	-
87-90: Wolverine app., Jim Lee-c	1.80	3.30	5.00	-
91-99, 101-105, 107-119,121-127	0.50	1.00	1.50	-
100-(2.00, 52 pgs.) Avengers app.	0.60	1.10	1.75	-
106-Northstar revelation issue	1.40	2.60	4.00	-
106-2nd printing	0.60	1.10	1.75	-
120-(1.25)-Polybagged w/poster	0.70	1.30	2.00	-
Annual 1 (9/86, 1.25)	0.50	1.00	1.50	-
Annual 2-(12/87, 1.25)	0.40	0.80	1.25	
Special V2#1 (6/92, 2.50)-Wolverine-c/s	0.90	1.60	2.50	

AMAZING ADULT FANTASY
(Amazing Adv. No. 1-6, Amazing Fantasy/No. 15)
No. 7, Dec, 1961-No. 14, July, 1962
Marvel Comics Group (AMI)

7-Ditko-c/a in all	64.00	161.00	225.00	H
8-Last 10¢ issue	53.00	132.00	185.00	H
9-13	46.00	114.00	160.00	H
14-Prof. Xpositor pe	51.00	129.00	180.00	H

AMAZING ADVENTURES (Amazing Adult Fantasy No. 7 on)
June, 1961-No. 6, Nov, 1961
Marvel Comics Group (AMI)

1-Origin Dr. Droom (1st Marvel Super-Hero)				
Ditko & Kirby art in all	143.00	357.00	500.00	H
2	79.00	196.00	275.00	
3-6: 6-Last Dr. Droom	64.00	161.00	225.00	

AMAZING ADVENTURES
Aug, 1970-No. 39, Nov, 1976
Marvel Comics Group

1-Inhumans (by Kirby in 1-4, ends #10) & Black Widow (ends #8) double feature begins	5.30	9.80	15.00	
2-4	1.80	3.50	5.00	
5-8: N. Adams-a	2.50	4.60	7.00	
9, 10: 9, 10-Magneto app.	1.80	3.50	5.00	
11-New Beast begins (1st app.), ends #17	3.50	6.50	10.00	H
12-17: 13-Brotherhood of Evil Mutants app.	2.50	4.60	7.00	H
18-1st app. Killraven, N. Adams-a	4.20	7.80	12.00	H
19-39	1.20	2.30	3.50	H

AMAZING ADVENTURES
Dec, 1979-No. 14, Jan, 1981
Marvel Comics Group

V2#1-Reprints X-Men 1, 38	1.40	2.60	4.00	
2-14: Early X-Men reprints	1.10	2.00	3.00	

AMAZING CHAN & THE CHAN CLAN, THE (TV)
May, 1973-No. 4, Feb, 1974 (Hanna-Barbera)

1	3.50	6.50	10.00	
2-4	2.10	3.90	6.00	

AMAZING FANTASY (...Adult Fantasy No. 7-14)
No. 15, Aug, 1962 (Sept. 1962 in indicia)
Marvel Comics Group (AMI)
15-Origin & 1st app. Spider-Man; 1st app. Aunt May & Uncle Ben

	2,100.00	5,800.00	8,300.00	+H

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, THE
March, 1963-Present
Marvel Comics Group

1-Origin retold; Ditko-c/a #1-38	1,935.00	5,525.00	8,000.00	+H
1 (Golden Records Reprint)	21.00	54.00	75.00	H
(with Golden Records (1966)	43.00	107.00	150.00	H
2-1st app. The Vulture	534.00	1,400.00	2,000.00	+H
3-1st app. Doc Octopus	286.00	775.00	1,125.00	+H
4-Origin & 1st app. The Sandman	229.00	620.00	900.00	+H
5-Dr. Doom app.	200.00	530.00	800.00	+H
6-1st app. Lizard	200.00	500.00	700.00	H
7, 8, 10: 8-Early FF backup story	129.00	321.00	450.00	H
9-Origin & 1st app. Electro	143.00	357.00	500.00	H
11, 12	74.00	186.00	260.00	H
13-1st app. Mysterio	100.00	250.00	350.00	H
14-1st app. the Green Goblin (Norman Osborn); Hulk's cover	271.00	679.00	950.00	H
15-1st app. Kraven The Hunter; 1st mention of Mary Jane Watson (not shown)	86.00	214.00	300.00	H
16-1st Daredevil x-over (yellow costume)	60.00	150.00	210.00	H
17-2nd app. Green Goblin (c/s)	110.00	275.00	385.00	H
18-1st app. Ned Leeds (later Hobgoblin)	64.00	161.00	225.00	H
19-Sandman app.	53.00	132.00	185.00	H
20-1st app. & origin The Scorpion	64.00	161.00	225.00	H
21-2nd app. The Beetle (see Str. Tales#125)43.00		107.00	150.00	H
22-1st app. Princess Python	39.00	96.00	135.00	H
23-3rd app. Green Goblin (GGS)	66.00	164.00	230.00	H
24	36.00	89.00	125.00	H
25-1st app. Mary Jane Watson (cameo) (face not shown, but introduced as Mary Jane)	44.00	111.00	155.00	H
26-4th app. Green Goblin; 1st Grime Master 50.00		125.00	175.00	H
27-5th app. Green Goblin	46.00	114.00	160.00	H
28-Origin/1st app. Molten Man	57.00	143.00	200.00	H
29, 30	33.00	82.00	115.00	H
31-38: 31-Intro Harry Osborn (later becomes 2nd Gr. Goblin), Gwen Stacy, & Prof. Warren. 38-Last Ditko issue; 2nd app. Mary Jane Watson (cameo, face not shown, 7/66)	26.00	64.00	90.00	H
39-Green Goblin-c/s; id revealed	33.00	82.00	115.00	H
40-Origin Green Goblin (1st time told)	50.00	125.00	175.00	H
41-1st app. Rhino	21.00	54.00	75.00	H
42-3rd app. Mary Jane Watson (cameo, last 2 panels) (1st time her face is shown) (11/66)	21.00	54.00	75.00	H
43-49	14.00	36.00	50.00	H
50-Intro Kingpin (7/67)	66.00	164.00	230.00	H
51-2nd app. of Kingpin	26.00	64.00	90.00	H
52-69: 56-Intro Capt. George Stacy	11.00	29.00	40.00	H
61-74, 76-Last 12¢ issue	10.00	24.00	34.00	H
75-89, 91-95, 99: 84, 85-Kingpin-c/s	8.00	20.00	28.00	H
90-Death of Capt. Stacy	10.00	24.00	34.00	H
94-Origin retold	13.00	32.00	45.00	H
96-98: Drug books not approved by CCA; Green Goblin storyline.				
97, 98: Green Goblin-c	17.00	43.00	60.00	H
100-Anniversary issue (9/71)	36.00	89.00	125.00	H

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101-2nd printing (9/92, silver ink) 0.70 1.50 2.00 H
102-Origin Morbius (52 pgs., 25¢ c) 29.00 71.00 100.00 H
105-118 6.30 11.70 18.00 H
119, 120-Spider-Man vs. Hulk 9.00 23.00 30.00 H
121-Green Goblin kills Gwen Stacy 21.00 54.00 75.00 H
122-Death of Green Goblin 29.00 71.00 100.00 H
123-128 6.30 11.70 18.00 H
129-1st app. The Punisher (2/74) 79.00 196.00 275.00 H
130-133, 138-169: 133-Last 20¢ issue 4.20 7.80 12.00 H
134-Punisher cameo app. (7/74) 7.70 14.30 22.00 H
135-2nd full Punisher app. (8/74) 19.00 46.00 65.00 H
136-Re-intro Green Goblin (Harry Osborn) 9.00 21.00 30.00 H
137-Green Goblin c/s (Harry Osborn) 5.30 9.80 15.00 H
161-Punisher (Cameo) 4.20 7.80 12.00 H
162-Punisher, Nightcrawler app. 7.70 14.30 22.00 H
163-173, 181-190: 181-Origin retold 2.50 4.60 7.00 H
174, 175-Punisher app. 6.30 11.70 18.00 H
176-180: Green Goblin app. 4.20 7.80 12.00 H
191-193, 195-199, 203-208, 210-219 2.10 3.90 6.00 H
194-1st Black Cat 4.20 7.80 12.00 H
200-Giant origin issue 7.00 15.00 20.00 H
201, 202-Punisher app. 7.00 17.00 22.00 H
209-Origin & 1st app. Calypso 2.80 5.20 8.00 H
220-237: 225-Foolkiller c/story (2/82) 2.10 3.90 6.00 H
238-1st app. Hobgoblin (Ned Leeds) (5/83) (w/Tattoo card intact) 19.00 46.00 65.00 H
238-Without Tattoo 8.00 19.00 25.00 H
239-1st Hobgoblin/Spidey battle (2nd app.) 12.00 26.00 35.00 H
240-243, 246-248 2.10 3.90 6.00 H
244-Hobgoblin cameo 3.20 5.90 9.00 H
245-Leib, Donovan w/Hobgoblin powers battles Spider-Man (10/83) 4.50 9.10 14.00 H
249-251-Hobgoblin/Spidey battle storyline 4.20 7.80 12.00 H
252-1st app. black costume for Spidey (5/84) 8.00 19.00 25.00 H
253-1st app. The Rose 2.50 4.60 7.00 H
254-Jack O'Lantern app. 3.20 5.90 9.00 H
255, 263, 264, 266-273, 277-280, 282, 283: 279-Jack O Lantern c/s. 282-X-Factor x-over 1.20 2.30 3.50 H
256-1st app. Puma 1.40 2.60 4.00 H
257-2nd app. Puma, Hobgoblin cameo 3.20 5.90 9.00 H
258-Hobgoblin app. (minor) 4.20 7.80 12.00 H
259-Full Hobgoblin app., origin M. J. Watson 5.30 9.80 15.00 H
260-Hobgoblin c-s 3.20 5.90 9.00 H
261-Hobgoblin c/s 3.50 6.50 10.00 H
262-Spider-Man unmasked 2.10 3.90 6.00 H
265-1st app. Silver Sable 4.60 8.50 13.00 H
265-Silver ink 2nd printing 1.10 2.00 3.00 H
274-Zarathos (Spirit Of Vengeance) app. (3/86) 1.40 2.60 4.00 H
275-(52 pgs.)-vi/origin by Ditko ; Hobgoblin-c/s 4.20 7.80 12.00 H
276-Hobgoblin story 3.20 5.90 9.00 H
281-Hobgoblin battles Jack O'Lantern 3.50 6.50 10.00 H
284-Punisher cameo app., Gang War begins, ends #288; Hobgoblin c/s 3.20 5.90 9.00 H
285-Punisher app.; minor Hobgoblin app. 6.30 11.70 18.00 H
286-Hobgoblin c/app. (minor) 2.10 3.90 6.00 H
287-Hobgoblin app. (minor) 2.10 3.90 6.00 H
288-Hobgoblin full app. 2.80 5.20 8.00 H
289-(1.25, 52 pgs.)-Death of Ned Leeds (1st Hobgoblin); Macendale (Jack O'Lantern) becomes new Hobgoblin 7.00 17.00 22.00 H
290-292 1.60 2.90 4.50 H
293, 294-Parts 2 & 5 of Kraven story 2.80 5.20 8.00 H
295-297 1.90 3.60 5.50 H
298-Todd McFarlane-c/a begins; 1st app. (cameo) Eddie Brock who becomes Venom (not in costume) 12.00 26.00 35.00 H
299-1st app. (cameo) Venom in costume 7.00 15.00 20.00 H
300-(52 pgs.)-Last black costume; 1st full Venom story 18.00 41.00 55.00 H
301-305 5.30 9.80 15.00 H
306-311, 313, 314 3.50 6.50 10.00 H
312-Hobgoblin battles Green Goblin 7.00 15.00 20.00 H
315-317: Venom app. 6.20 11.50 17.75 H
318-323, 325: 319-Biweekly begins 2.50 4.60 7.00 H
324-Sabretooth app.; McFarlane-c (no art) 4.20 7.80 12.00 H
326, 327, 329-No McFarlane 1.20 2.30 3.50 H
328-Hulk app., last McFarlane-a 3.50 6.50 10.00 H
330, 331: Punisher app. 1.40 2.60 4.00 H
332, 333-Venom-c/s 2.60 4.90 7.50 H
334-336, 338-345 0.90 1.60 2.50 H
337-Hobgoblin app. 1.20 2.30 3.50 H
344-1st app. Cletus Kasady (Carnage) 3.00 5.50 8.50 H
345-1st full app. Cletus Kasady 4.00 7.50 11.50 H
346, 347-Venom app. 3.30 6.20 9.50 H
348, 349, 351-359 0.70 1.30 2.00 H
350-(1.50, 52 pgs.) 1.10 2.00 3.00 H
360-Carnage cameo 2.50 4.60 7.00 H
361-Intro Carnage 5.60 10.40 16.00 H
361-2nd printing (1.25-c) 0.70 1.30 2.00 H
362, 363-Carnage & Venom-c/s 3.00 5.50 8.50 H
362-2nd printing 0.50 1.00 1.50 H
364, 366-374, 376-384: 373-Venom back-up. 374-Venom-c/s. 376-Cardiac app. 378-Maximum Carnage, part 3. 381, 382-Hulk app. 383-The Jury app. 384-Venom/Carnage battle 0.40 0.80 1.25 H
365-(3.95)-Hologram-c, pull-out poster; 1st app Spider-Man 2099 2.10 3.90 6.00 H
375-(3.95)-Holo-grafx-c; vs. Venom-c/s 1.90 3.60 5.50 H
Annual 1-(6/64)-1st Sinister Six; new #1 pg. story 80.00 200.00 280.00 H
Annual 2-('65)-New Doctor Strange story (rearlr) 29.00 71.00 100.00 H
Special 5-(11/66)-Avengers vs Hulk x-over 11.00 27.00 38.00 H
Special 4-(11/67)-Spidey Battles Human Torch (new #1 pg. story) 15.00 32.00 45.00 H
Special 5-(1/68)-Peter Parker's parents; New 40 pg. Reed Skull story 14.00 36.00 50.00 H
Special 6-(11/69)-r/#1 pg. Sinister Six story from Annual #1 6.30 11.70 18.00 H
Special 7-(12/70)-All reprints 6.30 11.70 18.00 H
Special 8-(12/71)-All reprints 6.30 11.70 18.00 H
King Size 9-(1973)-r/Spec. Spider-Man magazine (Green Goblin c/s, 40 pgs re-edited from orig. 58 pgs) 6.30 11.70 18.00 H
Annual 10-12 (1976-78)-All new s 2.50 4.60 7.00
Annual 13 ('79)-John Byrne-a 2.80 5.20 8.00
Annual 14 ('80)-Miller-c/a 3.20 5.90 9.00
Annual 15 ('81)-Punisher app., Miller-c/a 7.50 17.50 22.00
Annual 16-20 (1982-86) 2.10 3.90 6.00
Annual 21 ('87)-Wedding issue; direct sale 2.80 5.20 8.00
Annual 21 ('87)-Wedding issue; newsstand 2.80 5.20 8.00
Annual 22 ('88)-Evolutionary War 2.80 5.20 8.00
Annual 23 ('89)-Atlantis Attacks; Liefeld-p 2.10 3.90 6.00
Annual 24 ('90, 2.00) 1.20 2.30 3.50
Annual 25 ('91, 2.00)-1st solo Venom story 2.80 5.20 8.00 H
Annual 26 ('92, 2.25)-New Warriors c/story; Venom solo story, cont'd in Spect. S-M Ann. #12 1.80 3.30 5.00 H
Annual 27 ('93, 2.95)-Polybagged w/card 1.10 2.00 3.00
Skating on Thin Ice 1-('90, 1.25, Canadian) 1.40 2.60 4.00
Skating on Thin Ice 1-('93, 1.50, American) 0.50 1.00 1.50
Double Trouble 2-('90, 1.25, Canadian) 1.10 2.00 3.00
Double Trouble 2-('93, 1.50, American) 0.50 1.00 1.50
Hit and Run 3-('90, 1.25, Canadian)-Ghost Rider-c/s 1.10 2.00 3.00
Hit and Run 3-('93, 1.50, American) 0.50 1.00 1.50
Chaos in Calgary 4-('93, 1.50, American) 0.50 1.00 1.50
Giant Size 1-6: See Giant-Size listing
Giveaways: See Overstreet Price Guide listings

AMERICAN, THE
July, 1987-No. 9, 1989 (1.75, B&W)
Dark Horse Comics
1-(1.50) 1.80 3.30 5.00
2 1.20 2.30 3.50
3-5 0.90 1.60 2.50
6-9 0.60 1.10 1.75
American Collection (B&W, 5.95) 2.10 3.90 6.00
Special 1 ('90, 2.25) 0.80 1.50 2.25

AMERICA'S BEST TV COMICS
1967 (Giant Size, 68 pgs. .25 cent one shot)
American Broadcasting Company
1-Fantastic Four, Casper, Amazing Spider-Man 13.00 30.00 40.00

ANGEL AND THE APE (Becomes Meet Angel)
Nov-Dec, 1968-No. 6 Sept-Oct, 1969
National Periodical Publications
Showcase 77 (11-12/67)-1st Angel & The Ape 10.00 25.00 30.00
1-(11-12/68) 7.00 15.00 20.00
2-6 4.20 7.80 12.00

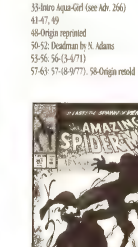
ANIMAL MAN (See Strange Adventures 180 for 1st app.)
Sept. 1988-Present (Color)
DC Comics
1-Bollland-c on all 5.30 9.80 15.00
2 3.50 6.50 10.00
3, 4 2.10 3.90 6.00
5-10: 6-Invasion tie-in 1.40 2.60 4.00
11-20 1.10 2.00 3.00
21-26: 26-Last Grant Morrison scripts 0.90 1.60 2.50
27-49, 51-55, 57-59 0.60 1.10 1.75
56-(2.95, 52 pgs.)-Last issue by Tom Veitch 1.10 2.00 3.00
56-(3.50, 68 pgs.) 1.20 2.30 3.50
60-65: 60-Begin 1.95-c 0.70 1.30 2.00

ANYTHING
July-Aug, 1968 - No. 6, July-Aug, 1969
National Periodical Publications
Showcase 74 (5-6/67)-1st app. Anthro 14.00 32.00 42.00 H
1-(7-8/68) 10.00 23.00 30.00
2-6 5.60 10.40 16.00

ANYTHING GOES
Oct, 1986-No. 6, 1987 (Mini-series)
Fantagraphics Books
1-Planting Carrot app. 1.10 2.00 3.00
2-4, 6 0.70 1.30 2.00
5-TMNT app., 2nd time in color 1.10 2.00 3.00

APPLESEED
Sept, 1988-Book IV #4, Aug, 1991 (B&W)
Eclipse International
1 4.20 7.80 12.00
2-4 1.10 2.00 3.00
Book II, 1-5 (7/89) 1.00 1.80 2.75
Book III Vol. 1-4 1.00 1.80 2.75
Book III Vol. 5 (5.50-c) 1.20 2.50 3.50
Book IV #1-4 (1/91-8/91, 3.50-c) 1.20 2.50 3.50

AQUAMAN
Jan-Feb, 1962-No. 63, Aug-Sept, 1978
National Periodical Publications/DC Comics
Showcase 30 (1-2/61)-Origin S.A. Aquaman 89.00 266.00 400.00 H
Showcase 31 (5-6/61) 50.00 150.00 225.00 H
Showcase 32 (7-8/61) 50.00 150.00 225.00 H
Showcase 33 (7-8/61) 62.00 187.00 280.00
1-(1-2/62)-Intro Quisp 62.00 187.00 280.00
2 34.00 86.00 120.00
3-5 24.00 61.00 85.00
6-10: 9-Sea Devils app. 20.00 45.00 60.00
11-20 15.00 34.00 45.00
21-32, 34-40 9.00 21.00 28.00
33-Intro Aqua-Girl (see Adv. 266) 13.00 30.00 40.00
41-47, 49 4.20 7.80 12.00
48-Origin reprinted 5.60 10.40 16.00
50-52: Deadman by N. Adams 7.00 17.00 22.00
53-56: 56-(3-4/71) 2.50 4.60 7.00
57-63: 57-(8-9/77). 58-Origin retold 1.60 2.90 4.50



Amazing Spider-Man #361, © Marvel

Trading Card Price Guide Introduction

Welcome to the Overstreet Trading Card Price Guide, a regular feature of Overstreet's Comic Book Monthly. CBM will keep you current on all of the hottest comic and media related cards in the "Marketplace"... as well as those newly introduced! You can depend on the Overstreet Card Guide to provide accurate values for current non-sports cards. That's because the prices shown here are averages of genuine dealer retail prices, not estimates! The pricing information is compiled from data supplied by our **Board Of Advisors** (listed at the beginning of the trading card section). You will note that this compilation lists prices for card sets, singles, specialty cards, and even unopened boxes when warranted. We have not itemized every card single, per the opinions of our advisors. We concur with their view... namely that most cards are assigned an average price for all cards in that set. Where single card prices do differ (e.g. specialty cards), card prices are listed separately. Prices often vary on certain individual cards within a set. As most collectors know, this is due to the popularity of a specific character, regionally specific market pressures, and/or the pressures of simple supply and demand. Collectors should take this into consideration when pricing cards.

All suggestions and criticism are welcome and your input is important to us! If you'd like to lend a hand in making the Overstreet Card Price Guide the most reliable card price guide ever published, send your comments to: Overstreet Publications, P.O. Box 2610, Cleveland, TN 37320 or FAX us at (615) 479-8156.

The whole idea of collecting cards is, first and foremost, to have FUN! Card collecting is, after all, a hobby. The problems start when new collectors forget this most basic principle.

When an attempt is made to turn the hobby into a "Get-rich-quick" scheme, financial "disaster" is always close behind. People who get into card collecting exclusively for monetary reasons almost always loose in the long run.

Trading cards have been around for a long time, longer even than comic books or comic strips. In fact, cards were issued as far back as the Civil War era. For the most part, this Price Guide deals with non-sports cards from the mid 1960s to the present. This is what most collectors are primarily interested in. Overstreet Publications projects that if interest in new cards continues to increase at present rates, demand for older pre 1960s cards will escalate as well. With each issue of Overstreet's CBM, new information and prices will be added. If you have trading card data and information, please send it to us. Card Data, Overstreet Publications, P. O. Box 2610, Cleveland, TN 37320 (or FAX us at (615) 479-8156. All new data and corrections to existing data is much appreciated!

HOW DO I START COLLECTING CARDS?

(1) First, collect cards that you enjoy!

(2) Set a budget for yourself and keep within that budget. The wonderful thing about collecting trading cards is there are so many varieties to choose from. There have been so many different card sets published over the past thirty years that it is relatively easy to find some that you like and fits into your budget.

WHERE CAN I GET CARDS?

There are several different places to acquire trading cards:

(1) Comic book and Sports card retailers. In most cases, they carry many of the recently released sports and non-sports cards.

(2) Local swap meets and flea markets.

(3) Many cities hold monthly sports card and non-sports card shows and conventions.

(4) Mail order dealers.

Because the overhead costs associated with selling at a card show or swap meet are lower than at a regular retail store, a collector may find some material at lower prices. Another factor to consider is the element of competition. Dealers who set up at swap meets and card conventions often experience greater competition than shops, and therefore sometimes offer lower prices in order to more successfully compete.

The advantage of shopping at a retail store is that they usually have a better assortment of non-sports cards sets and chase cards. Many retail stores will also hold cards or put them on a layaway plan for regular customers. These services are less likely to be offered by swap meet or card show dealers. Not only that, but shops have greater accessibility because of regular hours.

Usually collectors take advantage of both sources.

HOW DO I BUY, SELL, & TRADE CARDS?

Buying - Buying cards is not an exact science. Prices can vary from dealer to dealer. The best thing to do is to shop around until you find a dealer that you are comfortable with and can trust.

Never be afraid to bargain on the price of a card or set of cards. The worst thing that can happen is that the dealer will say no. In many cases, a dealer may make a counter offer which is lower than their original asking price.

This principle applies to both retail stores as well as convention dealers.

It is important to remember though, that the retail stores have more bills to pay (higher overhead), so don't be disappointed if you are not always successful with your offer. If you don't feel comfortable with a price, just say "thanks" and try another location.

Trading - Trading non-sports cards with other collectors can be as fun as trading sports cards. When trading, it seems to work well to trade "retail for retail". In other words, if you have a set of cards worth twenty dollars in the Overstreet Price Guide, trade for cards worth the same amount. Other factors can come into play that can change or otherwise affect this rule, but, for the most part, it's a good way to develop your trading skills.

Trading cards with a dealer can be a little more complicated. Usually, dealers will trade for about fifty to sixty percent of the value of the card or set of cards. For example, if a card set is retailing for ten dollars, the dealer may offer a trade value of five or six dollars for that set. Think about your deal ahead of time and remember your right to say no if you don't like the deal, just the way dealers have a right to say no when they don't like a trade that's being offered. And don't forget the option of making a counter offer. Often the price that is finally agreed to is somewhere inbetween your ideal price and the dealer's ideal price!

Selling - The best way to sell cards is by attending card conventions as a dealer. If selling at a card convention is not your cup of tea then you can sell cards to a dealer. Selling cards to dealers will get you from twenty to fifty percent of the card or card set's value. That twenty dollar card set is worth ten to a dealer TOPS. It's always best to try and trade instead of out right sell a card. You will get more value out of the cards that way.

HOW DO I PROTECT & STORE MY CARDS!

Like comic books, it is important to store cards in a protective environment. Cards can be damaged by the same things that can damage comic books. With this in mind, remember to store your cards in a cool dry place.

Cards can fade and turn yellow or brown if exposed to sunlight and certain types of fluorescent lights. Store cards out of the light.

To keep cards from bending or getting rounded corners, place them into plastic, non-acid, "nine-card-sheets". 100, 200, 500, and 1000 count cardboard boxes or plastic cases are also a good way to store large quantities of cards and are less

expensive than plastic sheets. These are available at any sports card shop.

THE "CHASE" IS ON!

Up until recently, the non-sports card industry has been fairly "low profile". In general, over the past thirty years, the subject matter for non-sports and entertainment cards has been primarily based upon the television and movie industry. These cards featured actual scenes from the TV show or movie. The card buyer had only one thing to collect, so card collecting wasn't very difficult.

In the 1970s, an added bonus was added to each pack of cards; a sticker. This marketing strategy was designed to motivate the unsuspecting card buyer to purchase more packs, because now there are two sets that need completing; complete a set of cards and complete a set of stickers. This wasn't difficult because every pack of cards had at least one sticker. Eventually the card buyer would get enough cards to complete the set.

This continued until Impel and Upper Deck did something to revolutionize the non-sports industry. They included, for the first time, a special card found only in a few of the packs. The card was a hologram and is now called the "chase" card. These "chase" cards were different, special, *and* harder to get. Their inclusion into selected packs of cards very successfully inspired card buyers to veritable purchasing frenzies.

Because these chase cards were availabele in such low numbers, the prices of the cards escalated to much higher values than ordinary cards... much higher!

No longer did the average card buyer purchase a pack to put a set together. Instead they purchased packs to try and find the chase card. In fact, making sets of cards became a byproduct of card acquisition while trying to get all the chase cards became a primary collecting goal.

GRADING AND PRICING CARDS

Grading and pricing cards is much like grading and pricing comic books. Some elements of value are:

(1) Condition - The higher the better.

(2) Subject Matter - The more popular the more in demand and the more in demand the higher the value.

(3) Quantity Printed - Limited print runs mean less cards to go around.

(4) Age - Older cards are generally harder to find and therefore more valuable.

The condition of a card is among the most important factor in determinng the price, but it is in no way absolute. For example, a card in a lower grade that is popular and hard to find can, and many times will, command a higher price than what is listed in a price guide, whereas, a mint set of an unpopular card could be worth less than the price listed. It is up to you, as the collector, to determine the price you are willing to pay for a given card or set.

Remember that grading is not an exact science and the grading scale below should be used as a starting point. Older cards prior to 1970 can be adjusted upwards 5%-10% if they are in excellent condition or higher.

Grades and Their Respective Values

Mint (MT) - A card with no defects whatsoever. All corners are sharp, the color is vibrant with the original gloss. No printing defects such as off centering of color should be visible. Card should be sharp and in focus. 100%

Near Mint (NM) - A card with any one of the following minor flaws: a corner with slight wear, slightly off centered. No color loss or yellowing should be visible. Can have a very minor focus imperfection. 75%-95%

Excellent (EX) - A card with any two of the following minor flaws: slight wear on a corner, slight off centerng, the original gloss is diminished, very slight focus imperfection. 50%-75%

Very Good (VG) - A card in this condition may have gloss loss, some yellowing of the borders may be visible, rounding at the corners, pictures can be slightly off focus. 20%-50%

Good (GD) - A card in this condition can have scuffing at the corners and on the face, borders can be uneven and yellowing of the borders is apparent, glossiness is no longer noticeable. 10%-20%

Fair (FR), Poor (PR) - Cards in this condition are usually used for fillers until a better condition card can be found. These cards can have brown and dirty boarders, scuffing, well rounded off corners, water stains, writing and some may even have pieces missing. 2%-10%

Editor's Note: CBM would like to give a special thanks to ***George Borow*** *for writing initial introduction to this section. George is a nationally recognized collector of non-sports trading cards and was the first Overstreet Trading Card Advisor.*

ROBERT LOWERY
Octopus Cards and Comics
465 Mills Drive
Benicia, CA 94510
(707) 746-5851

This last month, two major items hit the market: Marvel Masterpieces factory tin sets and Marvel Masterpieces 2 cards. The attractive tin sets (35,000) were released at a price that allowed dealers to break up the tin sets and sell off the pieces to make a bigger profit. Although it hurts to see so many tin sets destroyed, it is a good time for collectors to pick up Masterpiece I battle sets and card sets at bargain prices—about $35 a set for battle cards and $25 a set for the commons. Included in the tin sets are five unreleased cards. These are the true short-print of the series since only 35,000 of each exist. Once these tin sets are absorbed, which will not take long with Christmas coming up, prices for Masterpiece I cards will go back up again.

The Masterpiece 2 cards are even more beautiful than series 1, although I personally like the Spectra cards in series I better. Series 2 cards should be very hot and should be bought early before the price climbs, as it will. If you put the Series 2 cards in nine-pocket pages, the foil stamping on each page is the same color (page 1 red, page 2 silver, page 3 green, page 4 gold, etc.). This is consistent throughout the set except for cards 8 (Doctor Strange) and 15 (Captain America). If these cards are swapped, their foil colors match the rest of the page. This should have been caught in pre-production. I sell boxes of these cards as fast as I can get them and pack sales are also brisk. The most popular cards so far is the Venom promo, which many dealers will not even sell.

Marvel Universe IV is going strong in the San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles. Collectors are buying sets as fast as I can put them together. Foil cards from this series are going for $5 each with the Spidey/Venom hologram selling for $30.

FRANK L. BREVARD
1550 Shoup Ct #2
Decatur, GA 30033
(404) 712-9295

Greetings non-sport fans. The non-sport market has exploded with a force all of its own. I recently attended the '93 ComicFest held in Philadelphia which had a reported attendance of over 31,000 and in my opinion it should have been called ComicFest/CardFest '93. The sheer number of non-sport card dealers and representatives was overwhelming and I'm not just talking

about the main card manufacturers, but a score of independent and small run companies were present.

The true star of the convention was the long awaited, and well worth the wait, Marvel Masterpieces II. I can only say one word to describe the cards, "Awesome". The 90 card set features art work by a number of artists along with foil stamping on each card. The insert cards (there are eight of them), feature characters from the *X-Men 2099* series and sport a foil etched surface that is dazzling with color. Sets have been selling vigorously at $25 with the insert cards going for $10 to $15 each. At the moment, packs are selling for $1.50 to $2 each, with boxes going for approximately $46 each. I think this is a definite item to add to one's collection.

Fantasy art cards have been coming on stronger than ever. Sales of sets of Boris II, Rowenna, Frazetta, Ken Kelly and others have been steadily climbing. But wait, there is more. A whole new onslaught of fantasy art cards are on the move, featuring the art work of Joe Jusko, of Marvel Masterpieces I fame, Roger Dean, Keith Parkinson, Tim Hildebrandt, and Richard Corben just to name a few. This new trend lets us know there are more to non-sport than super heroes. I suggest you keep these cards in mind when adding to your collection, and I feel they may have definite collectibility potential down the road. The average fantasy art set goes for $15.

Other highlights of the ComicFest were a sneak preview of the upcoming X-Men cards by Fleer, recently acquired by Marvel. These cards are utterly fantastic. Just think of a Marvel Masterpiece card fused with the quality of a Fleer Ultra sport card and you can just imagine the possibilities. These cards are scheduled to be out in January. Other sets of cards are going to be put out by Skybox, Sandman and Vertigo fans should really like the cards, and Dark Dominion by Defiant and the River Group.

Well, that's all for now. Keep a watchful eye out for those non-sport cards and happy collecting.

SPARKS
BRUCE ELLSWORTH
Bruce's Comic Store
2432 Cerrillos Rd
Santa Fe, NM 87501
(505) 474-0494

Hello and Hola' from Santa Fe, New Mexico - Capitol City of the land of enchantment!

This month the big news is Skybox and its (renamed) 1993 Marvel Masterpieces. Seldom had a collection been awaited with such impatient anticipation. The Marvel Masterpieces Series One was one of the best selling collections we've had, thus it was no surprise that for literally half a year people have been bombarding us with the same question: When will new Marvel Masterpieces arrive??

Well friends and neighbors, the wait is over - they're here! Unfortunately the clamoring crowds of breathless card buyers are not! To understand why this is so, we must paraphrase and quote George Borow: The heart and soul of modern card collections are the "Chase" Cards. These cards are different, special, and of course, harder to find! The average card buyer purchased packs to try and find these cards. Now, what are the Chase Cards being offered by the 1993 Marvel Masterpieces. *X-Men 2099* - 2D cards of as yet to be established characters. Give me a break… and yes I know that the "collectors tins" will no doubt have special Chase Cards that are unavailable anywhere else, but I believe this misses the point. To wit we feel the average card collector is getting a raw deal: The Chase Cards are not Masterpieces and the price, whether it be pack, box, or case, is too high; end result - poor sales.

This is the status quo, but it need not remain so. Anyone who has seen the covers of the *Fatal Attraction* comics has seen the next step in 3-D holography. Wouldn't it have been neat if Masterpieces '93 had offered at least one Chase Card of that caliber?? Nuff Said.

LARRY DEMAN'S CARD CLUB
10581 Bloomfield Ave
Los Alamitos, CA 90720
(310) 799-1149

The non-sport card market is booming!! New collectors and dealers are realizing that non-sports cards are the latest craze in cards. The reason for the boom is based on manufacturers producing high quality cards with excellent artwork on a variety of subjects. This artwork is especially apparent in the comic & fantasy related cards; (Marvel Masterpiece, X-Men, Frazetta, & Olivia). These cards have bright colorful images & "chase" cards that are appealing to the eye.

The card market is popular with the card issues of the 1960's & 1970's and the latest issues of the 1990's. Collectors are still finishing their Outer Limits & Munsters sets. They're also trying to recapture their youth with cards that depict their television idols or movies that tickled their fancy. These are the main reasons for the current popularity of Partridge Family, Brady Bunch, Star Wars, Star Trek movies & TV series, Elvis Presley, & Marilyn Monroe. Cable television, as well as syndicated shows on independent networks continue to show the old TV shows. Conventions held throughout the United States are keeping these programs alive & well in the hobby.

There is an abundance of new cards being introduced in the hobby. From famous magicians to Coca-Cola cards, the hobbyist has a large selection of available titles. Many of the card titles are not marketed properly or get lost to the main stream titles produced by the large manufacturers. These manufacturers have clout to invest in marketing their products. Unfortunately, the public is not aware of these products & lose the opportunity to purchase them. An example of this is a set of issues in 1993 entitled "Classic Toys". This set illustrated famous collectible toys (Robots, Beatles figurines, & miscellaneous toys). The cards give a historic account of the toy & current market values based on trade value.

As a dealer specializing in non-sports trading cards, I have the opportunity to speak with investors & dealers throughout the United States & help assess market values of the cards. The following is a current product list of items I feel have the greatest investment potential and are currently in demand.

Hot List - October 1993 (No particular order)
1. Marvel Masterpiece Series 1 & 2
2. Superman Doomsday-Death of Superman
3. Partridge Family - (any series)
4. Star Trek-Original movie & television series
5. Star Wars Saga (Star Wars; Empire Strikes Back; Return of the Jedi)
6. Elvis - River Group (Also 1978 Donruss)
7. Brady bunch 1970-71
8. I Love Lucy
9. Fantasy Cards (Mainly Michael Whelen; Olivia; Boris Vallejo)
10. Marilyn Monroe - Any card, hologram, etc. (She is hot!!)

Cold List - October 1993 (No particular order)
1. Zap Pak
2. Decision '92 - Presidential candidates
3. Ultraverse
4. Valiant
5. Bloodlines
6. Beatles - River Group
7. Comic Ball 2 or 3
8. Comic Future Stars
9. Michael Jackson
10. Tales from the Crypt

Till next time, happy collecting!!

TRADING CARD PRICE GUIDE

A-TEAM
Topps 1983
66 Card Set (w/12 stickers) 7.50
Singles .10 ea.

ADDAMS FAMILY
Topps 1993
Box 10.00
Card Set (w/22 stickers) 7.00
Singles .10 ea.
Stickers .25 ea.

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS 1991
TSR 1991
Gold Border: 746 cards 600.00
Series I, singles (1-376) rare 1.00 ea.
Series II, singles (377-746) .50 ea.
Factory Set-Silver Border, 750 cards 25.00

ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS 1992
TSR 1992
Gold Border: 750 cards 65.00
Singles .08 ea.
Factory Set-Silver Logo, 750 cards 25.00

ADVENTURE INTO FANTASY I
Comic Images 1993
Box 30.00
90 Card Set 10.00
3 Glitter Prism cards 6.00 ea.
3 Opti Prism cards 6.00 ea.

ADVENTURES IN 'TOON WORLD
Upperdeck 1993
Box 40.00
90 Card Set 10.00
10 Hologram Cards 3.00 ea.
Bugs Bunny Hare-Os cards .50 ea.

ALF I
Topps 1987
Box 8.00
Card Set (w/stickers) 8.00
Singles .10 ea.
Stickers .15 ea.

ALF II
Topps 1988
Box 8.00
Card Set (w/stickers) 8.00
Singles .10 ea.
Stickers .25 ea. +

ALIEN
Topps 1979
Box 45.00
Card Set (w/stickers) 18.00
Singles .10 ea.
Stickers .25 ea.

ALIEN 3
Star Pics 1992
Box 20.00
Card Set 12.00
Singles .10 ea.

AN AMERICAN TAIL
SkyBox 1992
Box 15.00
Card Set 10.00
Singles .10 ea.
5 Holograms 5.00 ea.

ARCHIE COMIC CARDS
SkyBox 1992
Box 22.00
120 Card Set 12.00 +
Singles .10 ea.
5 Holograms 7.50 +
1 Mail-in card for Hologram 10.00

ARTHUR ADAMS
Comic Images 1989
45 Card Set 10.00
Singles .20 ea.

BACK TO THE FUTURE II
Topps 1989
Box 22.00
88 Card Set (w/11 stickers) 10.00
Singles .10 ea.
Stickers .35 ea.

BARBIE
Panini/Action 1992
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Singles .25 ea.

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Singles 2.75 ea.

Batman Animated #24, © DC

BATMAN THE ANIMATED SERIES
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Beautiful & Historical

Bravo to CBM's Gallery Of Greats and Steve Gentner. For many of us who can't afford the older books, it is always such a treat to see higher grade copies of beautiful and historical comics, and in color yet! Captain America was great, how about something about the different eras of the Human Torch and Sub-Mariner? Pat Calhoun's articles are great too, and his excellent way of writing about the 50's comics is both educational and entertaining. Often the comics Pat discusses are within my budget and I actually located and purchased a few and they are just as interesting as the column suggests. CBM is a winner all round. Several of my friends who are mail order dealers said that you are a "hard core" collector too. I'd be interested in knowing what you personally collect. Best of luck on a great magazine.

Earl S. Baker, Kansas

Thanks for your nice feedback, I'm sure Steve and Pat appreciate it too. As for me, my collecting interests include DC (first and foremost), ACG, Atlas, Dell and Gold Key "Annuals", Hanna Barbera, Jay Ward, Warner Brothers Animation comics, and off beat 50s horror books. I must confess that any 10¢ cover price book in high grade still perks my interest. I not only collect but I'm an avid reader as well. Thanks for asking and thanks for your nice letter.

Card Buff Query

The card buff is here! The Aegis card was totally rad. Has CBM given any serious thought to the requests made in my previous letter? I'm sure other fans of comic cards would like to see some of the stars mentioned on cards in the future. One final request. How about letting your fans know what the next GAG (or GAGS as the case may be) will be somewhere in your mag? I'll be eagerly watching for single cards of Cable and Stryfe.

The Card Buff, Missouri

We have received an amazing number of letters asking for a complete list of all the GiveAwayGimmicks and we plan to publish it in an upcoming issue. Last issue has the last Overstreet GiveAwayGimmick for awhile. Hope you got as much of a kick out of them as we did.

Valiant Effort

I am writing you to discuss a point I think (in my humble opinion) does not get talked enough about. The speculation market seems to center around Valiant and their comics and for one good reason. They have no newsstand contract! This seems to be overlooked by most people who can not understand why a character's first appearance in a Valiant book takes off so fast. In other comic book companies such as Marvel, Image, DC, and even Malibu they have a newsstand print which helps to satisfy the demand for a certain comic book when the direct issues are all sold out.

How many comic collectors out there have gone out to drug or book stores the following weeks to pick up a copy of a book that already sold out in direct edition at your local comic book store? I know I have more than once. When A Valiant book sells out in direct edition (unless the comic book retailer can reorder) that is it.

I know this letter will probably never get printed being this is the first time I have ever written one, but I feel this is a point that is always overlooked when discussing the speculation market. I constantly hear people complain about Valiant dominating the back issue and speculation market these past couple of years. This is one of the bigger reasons why I think this issue should get more attention.

I know this article sounds like I am Pro-Valiant but I am not any more than I am Pro-Marvel, Image, or DC. I merely wanted to draw some more attention to an issue I think is overlooked when discussing the market of comics today. Thank you for listening to my humble opinion and as always Make Mine Overstreet.

Robert Arnold, Indiana

Non-Hype Approach

The article/interview with the Bongo Comics people was terrific! Thanks for covering topics of a non-superhero nature occasionally. You're non-hype approach and accurate price guide has made me a loyal reader. How about an article on pre hero Marvel? Keep up the good work!

Elise Mascowitz, New York

Taking The Bait

I took your advice (Letter From The Editor in CBM #7) about getting comics for Christmas and I wanted to tell you that it seems to be working. In fact both my wife, my parents, my aunt, and even my grandparents have taken the bait. I can't wait, this could be the first Christmas of my entire life (I'm 31) that I get what I really want - COMIC BOOKS!!!!!! Make Mine Overstreet and how!

Wayne Garcia, California

Pretty Scarce

Pat Calhoun continues to amaze me with absolutely the best comic book collectors related column in print! And to Tony Starks: Keep those "bargain articles" coming. I always put his suggestions on my want list and so far he's been right every time. Thanks to all you guys for absolutely the best (and only true) collectors mag in print! By the by, did you know that the number one issue of your quarterly is pretty scarce here and a copy has already sold for $20! Better print more next time. Thanks for a great magazine!

Arnold F. Layton, Minnesota

Loose Staples

Never before have I purchased your guide on such a regular basis. I must say that I am pleased with your new magazine. You have managed to combine the best features of your previous two incarnations: Fair and conservative Pricing Information (Overstreet), Interesting and Diverse Market Reports (Overstreet), and Excellent and Informative Articles (Marketplace). While (in my opinion) all of the other so called "Guides" seem more interested in speculating and in manipulating the value of comics.

I am amazed that a lot of the books that populated Comic Book store's 25¢ bins for years in the 1970's-80's are now some of the most wanted books on peoples want lists. Most of these books are not particularly interesting in story or in art content. An excellent example of this phenomenon is the Joker's brief comic outing. The prices on these issues have increased dramatically, but now that people have read them, not too many people are interested in pursuing them for their collection. I see many dealers carry the same premium-priced (overpriced) *Spider-Man* #129 and *Incredible Hulk* #181. I'm beginning to think that these books aren't really for sale. Rather, they are trophies which the specu-leaches enjoy showing. Today, if these

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1st issue appearances were just starting to be published. I doubt that within a year they would ever reach the values they are now guiding for. No one wants to pay these prices and no one wants to sell them for less.

Besides praising your Book & making general comments about so called Hot Books, I am interested in knowing how the grading of a book, that looks to be in near mint to mint condition, is affected by one of the staples which has torn loose from the cover or the center of the book. I have a high grade copy of *Aquaman* #48, which has never been stapled and has some how managed to survive intact and in such good condition.

I look forward to seeing a reply about My problem with loose staples. As to the ongoing topic/debate about superficial cover enhancements, autographs, and polybagging. I suggest that you should have a forum where a few serious questions are put to your readership and then have them write in and have the results published in your next Market Update.

Mike Baker, Canada

Loose staples (LS), cover loose from staples or cover loose from lower or upper staple (CL), centerfold loose or centerfold loose from upper or lower staple (CFL), and never stapled (NS) are three distinctly different defects. Space precludes a long dissertation about them here, but you could refer to the Overstreet Comic Book Grading Guide (co-authored by yours truly) for more info. I would grade your copy of Aquaman #48 which has never been stapled accordingly:

Grade if staples present: MINT. Technical Grade without staples: VERY GOOD (Drops 4 grades).

Grade if staples present: NEAR MINT. Technical Grade without staples: VERY GOOD (Drops three grades).

Grade if staples present: VERY FINE. Technical Grade without staples: VERY GOOD (Drops two grades).

Grade if staples present: FINE. Technical Grade without staples: VERY GOOD (Drops one grade).

Grade if staples present: VERY GOOD Technical Grade without staples: GOOD (Drops one grade).

Grade if staples present: GOOD. Technical Grade without staples: FAIR (Drops one grade)

Grade if staples present: FAIR. Technical Grade without staples: FAIR (No effect on grade).

Grade if staples present: POOR. Technical Grade without staples: POOR (No effect on grade).

I consider the defect severe enough so that no book with it could be above VG. I'm also suggesting that as the grade gets lower and lower, the defect has less and less of an

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impact… until finally in the two lowest grades it has no effect at all. I would also like to state clearly that this is just my personal view and other seasoned graders out there will surely have a different perspective. In this regard, I think both the "Cumulative Defects Rule" and "Carter's 1st Rule Of Grading" seems applicable here. The latter rule states "Different defects have different esthetic value for different collectors." I say this because another collector may not weigh this particular defect (NS) as heavily as I have, while others may view it as even more severe than I. Thanks for writing in Mike… Who knows? Maybe other CBM readers will jump in to the fray and comment on this topic.

The Rare Real Cerebus #1

In your response to Carl Graves letter in *CBM* #7 concerning counterfeit comics, you neglected to mention what is probably the best known counterfeit book: *Cerebus* #1. Unlike the examples you mentioned, the *Cerebus* counterfeit does have a color cover (black, white, and red).

As noted in *CBPG* #23, the easiest way to recognize the fake is that the inside covers are flat instead of glossy. I believe I read somewhere that at the time Dave Sim printed the legitimate #1, he couldn't afford to make both the inner and outer covers glossy. The counterfeiters missed this, and ended up printing a higher quality comic than the legitimate #1.

Another warning sign is that the fake is usually found in very high grade, since the book entered the market after the legitimate #1 had escalated in value. My understanding is that the legitimate #1 is quite difficult to find in high grade. The print run was only 2000, and, as stated in the Overstreet Annual Price Guide, most were poorly printed.

It would be interesting to know what the print run was on the counterfeit. It's entirely possible that the counterfeits outnumber the real thing.

By the way, if you can find a legitimate *Cerebus* #1, this is a great time to buy. Five years ago, the book listed for $440, while *CBM* #7 values it at a mere $100. Quite a bargain for what is, in my humble opinion, one of the most important books of the 1970's.

Jeff Delaney, California

What if the counterfeit is the rarer item? Whew… I don't even want to think about! At any rate, thanks for your excellent information and insight Jeff. And thanks to everyone who wrote in this time! If you'd care to write, send your comments, concerns, and questions to:*

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(*And please, please, please… Include your telephone number with all correspondence!)

Tired of wading through the barrage of supposedly hot comics, only to find they really weren't that great? Having trouble finding a comic to actually read? Look no further, because every month I'll be filling these pages with the best of comics' recent offerings, rating each book on a scale of 1-5 stars. And away we go…

Daredevil: The Man Without Fear (Marvel) - Frank Miller… Daredevil, the early years… Is it really necessary to say anything else? Okay, okay! John Romita, Jr. Al Williamson. Enough? OK, if you insist… Remember back when Frank Miller did his original run on Daredevil? Didn't you wonder how he had such a lock on Matt Murdock's character and how he could make him so believable? Well he shows us here. Miller has known Murdock since childhood. He knew all the little things that we didn't… the things that made him the man he was. Now we know. Now, we can really understand! - 5 Stars.

Teenagents #1 (Topps) - Lots of us weren't around to see much of Jack Kirby's classic work when it first came out. And now with *Teenagents*, we're getting a taste of what this legendary talent can do! Writer Kurt Busiek has successfully infused Kirby's 1990's concepts with the same energy that Kirby put into his earlier work. And artist Neil Vokes captures the exciting and powerful spirit of Kirby's work. This book just may have the potential to excite younger readers with the "Kirby fever" of past decades! (I'm sorry, but there's not enough I can say about Vokes' art. It's amazing!) - 3.5 Stars.

Grendel Tales #2 (Dark Horse) - I'm a big Matt Wagner fan, so it was with no little trepidation that I opened the pages of the new *Grendel Tales*. I was very nervous about someone other than Wagner handling his concepts... boy was I wrong. James Robinson is probably one of the more exciting new writers to come along. He is taking four (count 'em four) different stories and weaving them into one. His characterizations may be a bit stilted, but the atmosphere is fabulous! Danish artist Teddy Kristiansen is painting the project and brings a definite touch of Wagner's style to it. While each creator is paying homage to Grendel's creator, they are, at the same time, enhancing the book by putting their own unique stamp on it - 4 Stars.

Wolverine: The Killing (Marvel) - Seldom (hopefully) would I recommend a book solely on the merits of the art, but when the artist is Kent Williams, well... ! Primarily known in the comics field for his painted work, Williams employs a pen and ink style on this book that is truly deserving of the Prestige Format it employs. It may be a bit too expressionistic for the average Wolverine fan, but it is fantastic and must almost be "experienced" rather that just viewed. The art reflects the script that John Ney Rieber has written. and highlights parts of Logan's character that would not have worked had the project been illustrated by another artist. A great melding of word and picture. - 3 Stars.

Pirate Corp$! #5 (Slave Labor Comics) - Up front, this comic is not really aimed at twelve-year-olds. As I've said in previous columns, I consider Evan Dorkin to be one of the kings of (for lack of a better term) Generation X comics. If you read this book when it was at Eternity Comics you probably won't even recognize it now. Dorkin has dropped the sci-fi/ action-adventure trappings and has devoted himself to telling the stories of a bunch of basically slacker-types. Guys who are in their mid-20's who are dedicated to a life-style but with little means of supporting it. If you feel you're a part of the X generation and looking for a new kind of comics, you owe it to yourself to go out and demand a copy of Pirate Corp$! - 4.5 Stars.

Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight #54 (DC Comics) - Twice in one column I'm recommending a book mainly for it's art, but this time it's because of Mike Mignola! Mignola has plotted a story (with dialogue by Dan Raspler) that's echoes the themes of Lovecraft and Poe. No one else could have illustrated it the way Mike has. He must be considered as one of the modern masters of light and form in the comic book field, much in the same way Will Eisner and Alex Toth have been acclaimed in previous generations. - 3 Stars.

The Demon Annual #2 (DC) - I've enjoyed Garth Ennis' writing since I first read the *Troubled Souls* graphic novel for Fleetway Publications a few years ago, and his work on Hellblazer has been consistently strong. Now he's doing The Demon and it's not exactly what I was expecting! Re-teaming with early partner John McCrea on art, Ennis has ren-

© Marvel

By Nick Wyche

dered a dark and horrific Demon (no surprise here). What was unexpected was that he kept the humor as black and devillish as it is! This book is gonna be a lot of fun, but if you've got a weak stomach, get off the roller-coaster now! - 3 Stars.

Static #6 (Milestone) - A lot has been made of Milestone's books in the press simply because of their multi-ethnic, multi-cultural take. A lot could be said of their quality writing and art as well. **Static** is a prime example of what makes Milestone books as good as they are: Robert Washington III is consistently one of the truest voices when it comes to youthful dialogue. He has a special knack for making his characters sound honest and believable. Artist John Paul Leon belongs to a new class of visual stylist. He takes the traditional comic book drawing style and filters it through the eye of a graphic designer. The result is a look that's quite compelling. A classic case of quality, not novelty! - 2.5 Stars.

Batman/Houdini: The Devil's Workshop (DC) - DC's Elseworlds concept has been catching some flak in certain corners as a poor man's What If? These criticisms are entirely unfounded and this newest entry in the line is solid proof of that. Howard Chaykin and John Moore have produced a period piece (early 20th century) that rings completely true... They've made the Batman an integrated part of this period. Batman is gothic in concept... and his very nature meshes perfectly with a time of lingering Victorian values. The gothic atmosphere set by Chaykin and Moore is illustrated in the lush water colors of Mark Chiarello. A Harry Houdini/Batman team-up is one of the better concepts imposed on the Batman mythos (right up there with Batman and the real Sherlock Holmes) and the execution of this intriguing theme is nearly perfect. - 4 Stars.

Cerebus #174 (Aardvark-Vanaheim) - Dave Sim is headed down-hill toward his #200th and as is usual in physics, this thing is picking up speed as it heads toward the finish line! I'd really love to give the secret of this issue away... but suffice it to say that if you've been a long-time reader you just may be blown completely away! This book is also important for it's text pieces. Sim is consistently one of the most astute "commentators" on the comic industry around and his editorials are always enlightening. Pick it up while it's still around! - 3.5 Stars. ■

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FABULOUS FANTASY FALL OF '53

By Pat S. Calhoun

Let's set the dial on the time machine to take us exactly forty years back and take a look at three comics dated December 1953. This was one of the boom years in the comic industry when over five hundred titles from scores of companies added up to approximately "a billion comics" published during those twelve months. So certainly Fall 1953 offered a bumper crop in every imaginable genre. Fantasy was riding high- claiming over 10% of the market- and these are three of the books that the era is best remembered for.

***Nightmare* #10**, from St. John, is (except for the cover and two filler pages) a reprint of Ziff-Davis' *Weird Thrillers* #2. This kind of thing happened often enough back then, as properties changed hands, and the book was well worth reprinting. The Joe Kubert cover is one of his finest in the fantastic genre… bringing to mind the work Steve Ditko (who was influenced by Kubert) would do for Charlton in 1954. Even the two fillers, one-page documentaries of events in "supernatural" history, are worth noting, as they are superbly rendered with the fine-line work of Everett Raymond Kinstler.

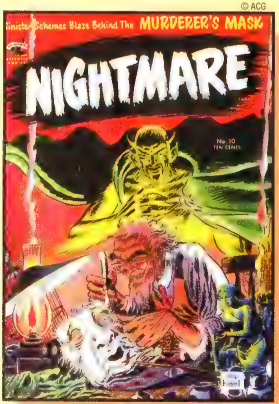
The stories are a feast as well. This book "out-DCs" DC; the stories are like those you'd find in *Strange Adventures*, and the art, starting with Kubert, comes from some people who did a lot of great work for DC. "The Fisherman of Space" is an outstanding sci-fi yarn with awesome art by the great Alex Toth. This age-old alien has been snaring humans for thousands of years, and they live as immortal captives on his fog-shrouded island. But the creature is dealing with modern men and modern science now, and his newest victims use their know-how to hunt the hunter. "The Last Man" tells of a new Adam and Eve after Armegeddon. Some twists and turns have been added to freshen the plot, and the art is pretty clean too.

The third story is one of the best time-travel paradox tales in the whole of fifties fantasy. A couple of naive aliens show up in their time-space machine and get hijacked by a crook on the lam. After a quick trip to prehistoric days and a brush with a hungry dinosaur, the bad guy kills the aliens only to fall prey to "The Cycle of Time". The slick style of Murphy Anderson's art helps to propel this one into the classic category. "Murderer's Mask" closes the issue, and it's a familiar bit of "biter-bitten" helped by Gene Colan's expressive art.

Also dated Dec 1953 is ***Adventures Into Weird Worlds* #24**. Atlas was going to town back then- with a dozen fantasy titles flooding the newsstands with high-quality product. The famous Bill Everett "man holding hypo and splitting in two" cover definitely defines the tastefully outrageous Atlas approach. "The One Who Was Dead" chronicles the reincarnation of Cleopatra; it's an adequate if unspectacular tale, competently drawn by Paul Reinman. "He Kidnapped a Rocket" is the story of a future world's "public enemy number one", and his attempt to avoid capture by stowing away on a space-ship bound for an uninhabited planet in a remote galaxy. Of course the only place this guy's really headed is for a fall, and it's staged with the wicked wit that sustained a good part of the Atlas output.

"The Hunter" is an even better example of Atlas' penchant for contriving nasty finishes for nasty people. This interstellar big-game hunter establishes himself as a creep within the first few panels, and his eventual entrapment on a world where humans are prey is related with gleeful grimness. "Halfway Home" has a bizarre plot that makes a good vehicle for Chuck "Wildman" Winter to exercise his talents on. His grotesque characters always operate at fever pitch and fill the panels with their intensity. A space-ship gets caught in Saturn's gravitational field and burns up so much fuel breaking free that they don't have enough to get back to Earth. But a scientist on board builds a machine designed to reduce the crew members to half their present mass- so that the remaining fuel will be sufficient. However, there's a glitch in his plan, and it's deliciously revealed in pure visual terms in the last panel.

"Look Out for the Martians" wraps things up with a spooky six-page alien invasion. This one starts at a science fiction convention where a writer's speech degenerates into a "Martians among us" rant that tells how the Martians have a way of implanting their own infants into human babies that grow up unaware that they're harboring monsters. Then when the Martian reaches maturity it wakes up and takes over the body. And there



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is one sci-fi fan in the audience who, before the night is through, will learn that this was not the raving of a madman...

The last of our December 1953 trio is ***Adventures Into The Unknown* #50**. This was published when the now defunct ACG (American Comics Group) was getting a little more gruesome with their supernatural stories. Ken Bald did the "Vampire Spider" cover, the story which begins the book. A mad scientist accidentally turns himself into a giant spider, then goes hunting humans to suck their blood. But the vampire finds out that nature has a way of dealing with things... It's a good story with good art by Bob McCarty. "The Labyrinth of Daboor" tells of two white treasure-hunters in India. When the local witch doctor tells one of them that he'll need a head to lead the way to the treasure of Daboor - the hunter goes back and decapitates his partner. The rest is predictable, but the whole thing is nicely drawn. "The Road to Death" is a so-so story of murder gone awry. In "The Impostor", a killer lays the blame for his crime on a monster of local legends, but there is someone who knows that's not what happened; the monster! "I Am a Zombie" wraps things up with some eerie events deep in the bayou swamps- and decadent drawings by Lin Streeter add to the atmosphere. It's a satisfying weirdie, and makes a strong finish for our foray into Fall 1953.

I hope you all enjoyed our jaunt back to the heyday of fifties four-color fantasy - I sure did! Till next month… ■

The Mighty Crusaders...

ARCHIE'S JLA!

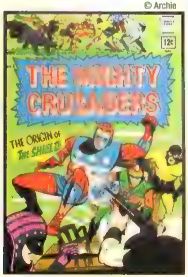
"We pledge to unselfishly use our great power to defeat evil and injustice everywhere! We will save the needy, the down-trodden and anguished... Topple evil persecutors and despoilers... So that all people can live in dignity, and joy, safe from oppression! We will bring mercy to the afflicted and troubled! So pledge The Mighty Crusaders!!!" And so begins Archie Publications answer to DC's *Justice League of America* and Marvel Comics' *Avengers*. *The Mighty Crusaders* #1 combined Archies' Silver Age superheroes into a fighting team...literally!

Unlike Marvel's Fantastic Four, who occasionally bickered with each other, the Mighty Crusaders made it clear in issue #1 that they truly disliked one another! Period!

This issue is also historic for it's unique cover. The logo "The Mighty Crusaders" is situated just above (middle center) on the cover and above the logo the crusaders are pictured in a beautiful free-for-all! (With their adversaries in this particular issue, the ultra villains.) To my knowledge, there was never a cover done in this layout-type prior to, or after *Mighty Crusaders* #1. Truly original...

Most important of all, perhaps, is that we learn how the Golden Age shield (the very first patriotic hero...before Captain America!) was turned into a non-living iron statue by the hands of the assassin known as "The Eraser" and his "Metalor Ion-Gun"... The death of the Golden Age shield!!

© Archie



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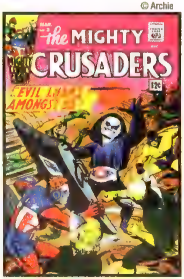

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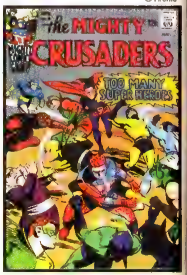

By John Mlachnik

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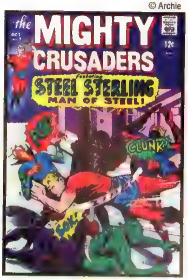

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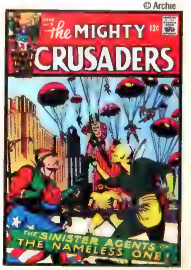

© Archie

We also learn the origin of the second Silver Age shield who turns out to be the son of the Golden Age shield grown to manhood and wearing one of the Golden Age shields' spare uniforms!! So yes, dear reader, Archie Publications gave us two Silver Age shields: Lancelot strong, the first Silver Age shield was introduced in *The Double Life of Private Strong* in 1959, and the original shield's son in 1965. First time ever in comic history that two heroes with the same name appeared in the same time frame! Truly original…

The seven issue run of the *Mighty Crusaders* can still be had for around $100. Issue #1 is very underpriced at $25.00! Remember, this book dates back to 1965, a classic year for Silver Age comics!

Happy hunting on these books but beware, issues #2 through #7 can be "Mighty" tough to locate!

And now for more interesting Archie Publications trivia. Do you know which Archie Publications comic books are considered the rarest? Based on both the Annual *Overstreet Comic Book Price Guide* and *Ernest Gerber's' Photo Journal Guide to Comic Books* (volumes one and two) here's my list of nominations for the scarcest Archie books:

Archie Comics #1, 3, and 4
Little Archie #1
Blue Ribbon Comics #9 (1st Mr. Justice)
Special Comics #1
Hangman Comics #8
Black Hood Comics #9, 11, 14, 15, and 17
Top Notch Comics #1, 3, 9 (1st Blackhood), 13, and 43
Laugh Comix #47, and 48

And the rarest Archie Publications comic book of all time? (drum roll, please) I believe it's the 1957 *Jughead's Folly* #1! This book is highly significant for two reasons. First , it is Archie publication's first "one-shot" issue… and second, it is perhaps the first reference to (and take-off on) Elvis Presley in comics! In 1957 Elvis Presley was at the height of his career…

The *Overstreet Price Guide* lists *Jughead's Folly* #1 as "rare" with only 10 to 20 copies known to exist in our world as we know it…

More wild data next time… Till then, don't forget to look at the bottom of the stack! ■

WHO ARE THESE LIGHTNING COMICS GUYS AND HOW ARE THEY SELLING 50,000 COPIES?

A Comic Company Created By Disgruntled Fans

OPPOSITE: Front Covers to Bloodfire #6 and Perg #2. New comics from the new Lightning Comics!

by Steve Zyskowski

The editor told us that he had received a number of letters asking about our company and some of our comics, and he invited us to give a little background on our comic book publishing company and to "tell our story" as it were. So here goes:

My brother Joe and I are from Detroit. In November of '92 we decided to take a big gamble. We had both been long time comic book collectors and fans, but we were often let down by what we felt was a lack of quality in some modern day comic books... books which, in our opinion, seemed to lack "substance."

Rather than spending our hard earned money on new comic book purchases that were not very appealing to us, we decided instead to found Lightning Comics, and publish our own comic books. We knew it wasn't going to be easy, especially without any previous publishing experience! But we were determined to make sure that Lightning had more than just a new universe of characters to offer. We set high business standards and created a new philosophy in printing.

Like many new comic companies, we initially faced a veritable plethora of the usual skeptics and doubters. But undaunted, (and naive to say the least) we went ahead with our plans anyway. Everyone told us that we couldn't do it. But we didn't listen. We believed in our product, in our staff, and in each other (There's really an element of family at Lightning Comics).

First we also hired the penciling talents of some really talented new-comers: Julius Jackson, Terral Lawrence, Karl Kerschl, and Eric Pence. Then we sent in our *Bloodfire* #1 solicitations to our Distributors back in April. They said that they would carry our line of comics, but that we'd also be lucky if we sold over 2,000 copies of the book nationwide. We thought that seemed low, so we set our sights higher. We just knew that our hard work and marketing would pay off... and it did! We sold 50,000 copies! After that, Diamond Comics Distributors (in their September Previews catalog) hailed *Bloodfire* #1 as one of the "biggest selling little comics of all time"

Our printing philosophy states that "no more than 250,000 copies will be printed of any first printing." My brother and I felt this would ensure future collectibility, while at the same time enable us to print an adequate amount of books for fans to easily obtain.

I was visiting a local retailer who had hundreds of modern comics sitting in his stockroom, as well as many other books that he wasn't able to sell. He bought a lot, like most dealers in the country. When supply exceeds demand, people go out of business. We didn't want Lightning Comics to contribute to that. We figured that just limiting the supply doesn't necessarily guarantee success. People have to be looking for the book, wanting to read it — there must be a demand. We felt we were on the right track. It seems to be working... many retailers in the New York area have told us that our comics have been selling great!

We try to be very critical of our product because we want to be recognized for creating exciting and memorable stories, accompanied by excellent artwork and coloring. We're putting entertainment value first, and collectibility second. *Bloodfire* #1 was our first effort. While it was the best we could do with what we had, we needed to get better and take it to the next level. So we upgraded our coloring process from art markers to air brush. Since August, every Lightning book has been colored using air brush, made possible by the talents of Lightning's new art director and air brush master, Greg Weed.

Greg's talents are evident in Cadillac brochures and numerous display packages for many big companies like Gillette. Lightning Comics gave the new art director many samples of what they thought was excellent coloring samples in comic books. Greg studied them, and then rendered his

1993 San Diego Con was all work and no play for Lightning Vice President Steve Zyskowski.

Joe Zyskowski, President of Lightning Comics, and Dell Barras of Marvel U.K. agree on a joint venture coming in December.

Art Director, Greg Weed proudly displays completed paints on page 1 of Judgement Day #2.

own style which he is teaching to a team of colorist working at Lightning. I am happy to report that the feedback on the new coloring is very positive and some professionals have even suggested that it is some of the best they've seen.

Other good news. Our second title, ***Judgment Day*** #1, which shipped in Sept., made the Heroes World Distribution Top 100 list, selling 60,000 copies. We've been told that this was something of an achievement, since it happened during a time when most orders were on the decline.

I feel a lot of our success has to be attributed to several factors: We've worked hard to make sure our books were on time, every month! We printed our covers on high quality card stock. And our "good stories-moderate print runs" philosophy. The proof that this approach was working was the rapid sell out of our books, combined with fans asking for more. It's no secret that dealers like books that sell out. We like them too… Creating a comic that sells out is an absolutely terrific feeling! Additionally, we believe *Perg* #1 (our third and final new 1993 title) will be the comic that earns us a real name in the business and will show everyone that we can produce three high quality comic titles, and on time!

Besides encouragement and positive feedback from distributors, retailers, and collectors all over the country, our comics seem to have caught the attention of some very well known creative talents as well. Javier Saltares (who penciled Marvel's *Ghost Rider* and is currently heading the *Night Thrasher* project) penciled and inked the glow in the dark flip-cover used on *Perg* #1.

Well known penciler (and long time fan of horror comics) Dell Barras (Marvel's *Death's Head*) has also joined forces with us, and makes his debut in *Perg* #3. Dell told my brother and I that working with Lightning Comics reminded him of the golden days of comics, when everyone involved in the creative process was like family, because everyone really puts a team effort into the project. That's a great thing to hear.

In closing, let me say thanks to the many fans who have supported us by purchasing and reading our books - we appreciate it and we won't let you down. We plan on a lot of hard work and we pledge not to become complacent. You've got my personal guarantee. Thanks to CBM for the space and thanks to you for reading. All of us at Lightning Comics wish you happy collecting! ■

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30 Years of IRON-MAN!

Tony Starks on Tony Stark

December 1993 marks the 30th birthday of the modern day Iron-Man. As I reflect on the evolution of this "founding member" of Marvel's Silver Age and his myriad stories of the past three decades, I'm struck by the amazing changes. Consider, if you will, the drab, bulky, grey armor of the original Iron man. Hastily assembled by Tony Stark and professor Yinsen to keep Stark's injured heart beating in *Tales Of Suspense* #39 (May 1963), the armor (which lasted only a single issue) was essential in winning freedom from the "Red Guerrilla Tyrant, Wong-Chu."

The more visually appealing, but still ponderous golden armor that replaced the grey in *Tales Of Suspense* #40 lasted just eight issues, but *Tales Of Suspense* #48 introduces the familiar red & gold armor that has, with only minor modifications, served Anthony Stark to this day - and for some THREE HUNDRED FIFTY PLUS ISSUES! While a NM copy of the "forgotten" grey Iron-Man in TOS #39 guides for over $2,000, the first appearance of the Iron-Man of today in *TOS* #48 lists for less than $200!

***Tales Of Suspense* #48** (Dec 1963) explains Tony Stark's need for new armor. "It's too heavy! Saps too much of my energy to merely support the weight!" Stark decides to design a new Iron-Man costume that is lighter in weight and far more flexible, thus "not so great a strain on my heart!" In some ways, this new armor was even more powerful, because "due to its lighter weight, I'll be able to carry more protective devices!" The new Iron-Man soon proved his prowess by defeating the villain introduced in issue #48, the Doll.

***Tales Of Suspense* #49** (Jan 1964) features the first crossovers of both the Avengers and the X-Men. Published the same month as *Avengers* #3 and *X-Men* #3, this nifty tale by Stan Lee and Steve Ditko turns the Angel into a merciless and cruel villain. When the Angel quits the X-Men to join the Brotherhood of Evil Mutants, the X-Men call the Avengers for help. Iron-Man is the only Avenger to hear the call and brings the Angel to his senses by putting his own life on the line. At the last minute, the Angel recovers and rescues Iron-Man. Also, issue #49 has the premiere installment of the five page back up feature "Tales of the Watcher," which ran through issue #58.

***Tales Of Suspense* #50** (Feb 1964) contains the 1st appearance of the Mandarin - one of Iron-Man's most dangerous foes. The Pentagon asks Iron-Man to sneak into Red China and investigate the Mandarin. Iron-Man soon learns the Mandarin is not an opponent to be taken lightly - he is the worlds greatest Karate master and possess ten "rings of power". Stark completes his mission and returns to the USA to find Happy Hogan (Stark's chauffeur) and Pepper Potts (his secretary) on their first date - the occasion an employee dinner at Stark Industries. Thinking Tony will not be at the dinner, Pepper goes with Happy, reasoning: "The big ox! He has all the charm of a doorknob! But he's better than no date at all...I think!" Tony shows up at the dinner, and Pepper worries that he will never ask her out if he thinks she is seeing Happy.

© Marvel

***Tales Of Suspense* #51** (Mar 1964) introduces the Scarecrow, a fairly forgettable villain. More interesting is the romantic triangle developing between Happy, Pepper and Tony. A jealous Pepper scuttles one of Tony's glamour dates, telling Veronica Vogue that Tony is out. Later, Tony gets even by giving the tickets to the show that he and Miss Vogue planned to attend to Happy and Pepper, much to Pepper's disdain.

***Tales Of Suspense* #52** (Apr 1964) introduces that beautiful Russian spy the Black Widow and her partner Boris. In "The Crimson Dynamo Strikes Again", Boris and the Black Widow are dispatched to kill Anthony Stark, his bodyguard (Iron-Man), and professor Vanko (AKA the Crimson Dynamo), who defected to the west in issue #45. While Natasha charms Tony at dinner, Boris in the Crimson Dynamo's armor goes on a rampage at Stark Industries. Iron-Man arrives on the scene but is caught off-guard by the Crimson Dynamo. Professor Vanko rescues Iron-Man by using an unperfected laser weapon - which blows up - apparently vaporizing the professor and Boris while the Black Widow escapes.

But "The Black Widow Strikes Again" in ***Tales of Suspense* #53** (May 1964). To atone for her earlier failure, the Black Widow plans to steal an anti-gravity ray that Tony Stark has invented. She charms her way into Tony's office, on the pretense of explaining her past behavior. Once there, she gasses Stark and grabs the ray. Natasha causes much havoc before Iron-Man destroys the ray - but once again the Black Widow escapes.

By Tony Starks

© Marvel

This issue is also interesting in two other ways. First, in the Iron-Man story, Tony Stark is criticized by both the press and Washington for the first time "for allowing the ray to be stolen." Second, this issue's Watcher tale explains the origin of the Watcher.

Tales Of Suspense #54 (Jun 1964) begins a two part tale "The Mandarin's Revenge" which concludes in *Tales Of Suspense* #55 (Jul 1964). The story really benefits from the longer format, which allows plenty of room for both slugfests and character development. Issue #55 also contains a nice five page bonus feature that includes a biography on Pepper Potts and reveals secrets about Iron-Man's armor.

Tales Of Suspense #56 (Aug 1964) introduces another Russian villain, the Unicorn. Possessing a power beam designed by the Crimson Dynamo prior to his defection. The Unicorn proved to be a powerful and ruthless opponent. Forced to surrender to save the lives of his employees, Iron-Man later escapes, capturing several Russian spies in the process. The Unicorn gets away, however. And starting with this issue Stan Lee begins to emphasis the tragic aspects of Tony Stark's life: "I'm sick of being Iron-Man! Sick of living on borrowed time...never knowing which moment will be my last!"

© Marvel

Tales Of Suspense #57 (Sep 1964) is the first appearance of Hawkeye. Hawkeye wanted to be one of the good guys, but a misunderstanding with the police and a chance encounter with the Black Widow sends him down the wrong path. Completely under the Black Widow's spell, Hawkeye agrees to destroy Iron-Man. But Natasha ends up the only victim of the Hawkeye - Iron-Man battle, catching the force of one of Hawkeye's demolition blast arrows. A distraught Hawkeye escapes Iron-Man and rushes off with the Widow to seek medical attention.

© Marvel

Tales Of Suspense #58 (Oct 1964) employs the patented Marvel formula of placing two heroes in conflict with one another. "In Mortal Combat with Captain America" begins with one of the classic covers of the silver age. The story unfolds as the Chameleon tricks Iron-Man into battling Captain America by conning Iron-Man into believing that the real Cap is actually the Chameleon! The ensuing epic battle showcases both Captain America's battle savvy and noble spirit. Giant Man and the Wasp of the Avengers arrive to set things straight, and as the Chameleon is led away to jail, Iron-Man and Cap patch things up.

Issue #58 was Stan Lee's way of introducing *Tales Of Suspense* fans to Captain America! Beginning with Tales *Of Suspense* #59 (Nov 1964), Iron-Man and Captain America would share the billing. Almost four years would pass before Iron-Man would once again enjoy the solo spotlight in his own book. Yet few collectors would fault Marvel Comics for the 41 issues that were to follow and the wonderful Jack Kirby Captain America stories they contained. Ah… but that's another installment of Comics In A Flash for another issue of CBM. See you then. ■

FUTURE GOLD?

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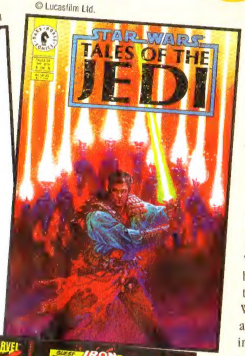

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Gambit #1 (Not pictured) - Real hot book! Its got a enhanced black cover and one of the X-Men's favorite heroes, shrouded in mystery. He's just plain cool. This could have some investment potential because of the fact that he is so popular. Lee Weeks does the art, and he brings the characters to life, plus he has a style similar to Texierra. We'll just have to see how the series goes. Its also exciting because it involves a much deeper relationship between Gambit and Rouge. Hot!

***Star Wars: Tales of the Jedi* #1** - It's flying off the shelves. The cover is painted by Dave Dorman. In the wake of all the new excitement in *Star Wars*, Dark Horse is starting a series of books that describes the adventures of the Jedi before the Star Wars Trilogy we know. It's really exciting because we are given part of the history of the Jedi, and since *Dark Empire*, more Star Wars books, figures, and posters have been appearing in the market. I think it has good investment potential, especially with the prospect of an upcoming Star Wars movie.

***Spider-Man* #41** - Jae Lee! He starts a run on *Spider-Man* that may increase the value of a title that has been slowly plodding along since McFarlane left. Iron Fist makes an appearance, and popular artist Jae Lee nicely combines both characters to create an awesome combination… and battle book.

***Prime* #5** - Rune B Nightman part 2. *Prime* is picking up on sales, and increasing demand for these books may see movement in the price. Since Barry Windsor-Smith is doing *Rune*, this flip book has tripled in value. Stores can't keep these in stock.

Daredevil #319 - Man! What a story. After the first two pages I was hooked. I don't know if this book is as scarce as our market reports suggest, but it doesn't matter, the story was great. The inkers, (Collazo and Candelario) did a tremendous job. Its been along time since a story has really grabbed this readers attention the way this one did. This could be a "major sleeper" of 1993! ■

By Mike Renegar

SILVER SLEEPERS!

Hello fellow comic collectors and fans! Here are four great Silver Sleepers that are, in my opinion, still undervalued. These Silver Age gems, while not exactly "cheap", are all likely due for some substantial price increases in the near future. So get 'em while (and if) you can.

***Mystery in Space* #75** (DC 5/62). The first JLA cross-over and, aside from several cameo appearances in it's various members solo titles, the only full JLA cross-over in the Silver Age! With it's bright yellow and white cover, this issue is very difficult to find in high grade. If you do happen upon a high grade copy it's usually priced above the guide value of $150.

***Tales to Astonish* #57** (Marvel 7/64). Highly undervalued in high grade - the third full Spider-Man cross-over, released the same month as *Amazing Spider-Man* #14. Currently Guides at an amazingly low $80.

***Justice League of America* #21** (DC 8/63). First full appearance of the Justice Society in the Silver Age, also the first Silver Age appearances of Dr. Fate, Hourman, and the Black Canary. The first of many annual team ups between DC's greatest teams of the 40's and the 60's. With their cameo in *Flash* #137 (DC 6/63) going for $275, this one's a bargain at $200.

***The Brave and the Bold* #54** (DC 7/64). The first appearance and origin of the Teen Titans. DC's "Junior Justice League" have (with the exception of a couple of brief periods in the 70's) been on the stands, in one form or another, from 1966 to the present. Also, when you consider all the collector attention that has been recently focused on *Showcase* (DC's other "try-out" mag), many *Brave & Bolds* appear to be a steal. Especially this one at $175 in NM.

Well, that's all for now folks, thanks for reading... and happy hunting! Oh yea, and Make Mine Marv...er, Overstreet! ■

By Ray Connel

MINI & MIGHTY

© Marvel

SPIDER-MAN
IN THE CLUTCHES OF DOC OCK!
SCIENCE STUDENT PETER PARKER WAS BITTEN BY A RADIOACTIVE SPIDER...
OW!
...AND GAINED SPEED, AGILITY, AND THE POWER TO STICK TO WALLS!
HE BECAME THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN!

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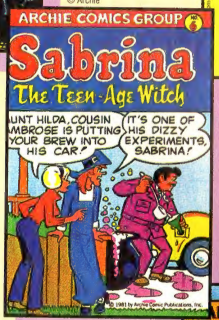
STAN LEE PRESENTS THE INCREDIBLE HULK
"FOLLOW THE LEADER!"
A NUCLEAR EXPLOSION BATHED PHYSICIST BRUCE BANNER WITH GAMMA RAYS
SOME WILL!
NOW, IN TIMES OF STRESS, HE BECOMES...
THE RAMPAGING HULK!

© Marvel

It was during the Summer of 1981 and shortly after my 12th birthday when I first caught comic book fever. I couldn't read enough of those amazing stories about amazing people with amazing powers. One dollar (and a ride from Mom to the local Minute Market) would buy at least four comics then… and hours of entertainment. It was during one such trip that I discovered some of my favorite superheroes—Spider-Man, The Hulk, Captain America—not on the magazine rack, but in a small box next to the baseball cards. "Bubble Funnies," the box read, "a miniature comic book collection… with bubble gum inside!! All new comic stories!! Collect all Six!!" A miniature comic book, all new stories, and bubble gum? This was my lucky day.

At home, I chewed away while reading about The Amazing Spider-Man "In the Clutches of Doc Ock!", The Incredible Hulk while "Trapped in the Lair of—the Leader!" and Captain America when "The Red Skull Strikes from Space!" Each story, though a mere ten pages, featured plenty of Marvel action: Spider-Man prevents Doc Ock from steal-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ARCHIE COMICS GROUP
Sabrina
The Teen-Age Witch
AUNT HILDA, COUSIN AMBROSE IS PUTTING YOUR BREW INTO HIS CAR!
IT'S ONE OF HIS DIZZY EXPERIMENTS, SABRINA!

ing a "worldwide information console"; the Leader plots to absorb the Hulk's raw power; and Captain America must disarm the Red Skull's orbiting Skull Satellite to keep America "safe for democracy."

Looking back on these collectibles almost thirteen years later, I realize what a great introduction they were to the world of comics. Not only did each one contain a two-panel origin of the hero, but they provided valuable information that new readers weren't likely to know. Doctor Octopus, for example, reveals his name to be Otto Octavius and Spider-Man reveals Doc Ock to be "just an ordinary little man" when his octopus arms are occupied. "Satellite of the Red Skull" features cameos of Nick Fury, Agent of S.H.I.E.L.D., and the President of the United States. In a bit of historical foresight, Captain America even travels to intercept the Skull Satellite in a "prototype of the government's secret Stealth Program" which is "invisible to radar"—though it looks more like Wonder Woman's invisible jet than the Stealth Bomber.

I soon returned to the store and, in true collector fashion, purchased the remaining three Bubble Funnies to complete my collection—even Archie and Sabrina. Over the years, these six little comics have become a valued part of my collection—not only because of their uniqueness but the hours of pleasure they provided to a boy just discovering the wonder of comics.

And I still have comic book fever. Of course, I've never wanted a cure. ■

by John K. Edwards